GRAND OPERA IN AMERICA

by HENRY C. LAHEE

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MADAME MALIBRAN.

Grand Opera

in America

By

Henry C. Lahee

ILLUSTRATED

Boston

L. C. Page & Company

Publishers

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PREFACE.

In making this sketch of the progress of opera in America, the writer has endeavoured to get in touch with the most interesting characters, — managers, conductors, as well as singers, who were instrumental in cultivating the public taste for opera.

In the early days many of the most interesting singers were not artists of world-wide celebrity, but they played a most important part in the history of opera in America.

From about 1870 most of the greatest singers who appeared in this country have been mentioned in "Famous Singers," and in this volume reference to them is confined to their doings in America.

New York has always been the headquarters of all operatic enterprises in America, —

with the exception of New Orleans, which city had a separate operatic existence of its own, — therefore it has not been possible to devote much space to operatic doings in other cities, except so far as to indicate the extension of operatic enterprise to distant points.

That this book will be interesting is the hope of the writer. That it should be perfect, in such a small space, is an impossibility, and it claims to be nothing more than a sketch.

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GRAND OPERA IN AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

BALLAD OPERA.

THE history of opera in America is comparatively short, and may be practically all included in the nineteenth century.

In the year 1600, when opera was first publicly performed in Florence, Sir Walter Raleigh, who had but recently returned to England, took with him, as symbols of the highest form of art at that time existing in the New World, the potato and the tobacco plant.

During the seventeenth century, while Lulli, Purcell, Buononcini, and others were producing their operatic works, the inhabit-

ants of the young colonies of Virginia, New Amsterdam, and Massachusetts were engaged in pastoral and Indian pursuits, occasionally enjoying a change from the monotony by being themselves pursued.

During the lifetime of Händel, who wrote operas at the rate of from one to eight per annum, the colonies were growing strong, and before the declaration of American Independence in 1783 many of the greatest European singers had enjoyed their careers and died. Mrs. Tofts, Margherita d'Epine, Anastasia Robinson, Cuzzoni, Bordoni, Senesimo, Farinelli, Caffarelli were but memories.

The first opera ever given in New York was the "Beggar's Opera," performed by a company of English actors in 1750.

"The Beggar's Opera" was the most successful of the English ballad operas, which held the stage in America until 1825. It was produced in London in 1728, and achieved a triumph so great that it seriously

affected the success of the Italian opera enterprise of Händel at the Haymarket Theatre.

The origin of the "Beggar's Opera" is attributed to a remark of Dean Swift's that "a Newgate pastoral" might be made a pretty thing. John Gay took the idea, and made a hero of a cutthroat highwayman. Doctor Pepusch arranged the music from old English and Scotch melodies and some of the most popular tunes of the day. This opera was performed sixty-two times during its first season, and retained its popularity for many years. The dialogue is full of keen satire on the politicians and courtiers of the day, and on Italian opera, which was then the prevailing fashionable entertainment.

When the "Beggar's Opera" was produced, the part of Polly Peachum (prima donna soprano) was given to Lavinia Fenton, an actress and singer who had previously attracted no attention. She became at once

the idol of the town, and eventually married the Duke of Bolton.

The "Beggar's Opera" came to America when about twenty-two years old. It was by no means the only ballad opera, but was the most popular of a host of similar productions, and the ancestor of what has generally been classed under the head of English opera to this day.

We are told by Mr. W. G. Armstrong that several of these musical plays were performed in Philadelphia in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The earliest name of distinction was that of Mrs. Oldmixon, who came from Drury Lane Theatre, London, and made her first appearance in America in the opera of "Robin Hood," at the Chestnut Street Theatre, in 1794. Mrs. Oldmixon was formerly a Miss George, and had married Sir John Oldmixon, Bart.

Previous to Mrs. Oldmixon, Miss Broadhurst and Miss Brett were popular singers.

The first of these ladies came from England with a Covent Garden reputation, and was engaged in Philadelphia in 1793. Two years later she appeared in New York, as did also Miss Brett, a very young lady with a powerful voice. These ladies were not remarkable for beauty, and were quite eclipsed by Mrs. Oldmixon, who had been a great favourite in London. On her marriage she left the stage, but when she came to America she resumed her professional career. Mrs. Oldmixon had a voice of great compass and sweet quality, sang with skill and taste, and was a very accomplished woman. On retiring from the stage, she established a school in Philadelphia.

Miss Leesugg, who was called the "Hebe" of singers, was a contralto, and after a successful career married Hackett, the comedian. She was for several years a great favourite.

Boston was considerably behind New York and Philadelphia in regard to opera, and

until 1828 musical efforts appear to have been devoted to psalmody, and the "fuguing tunes" of William Billings, the tanner, composer, and founder of the Stoughton Musical Society.

A very excellent pen picture of musical Boston is given by the celebrated Frenchman, M. J. P. Brissot de Warville, in a letter written by him: "You no longer meet here that Presbyterian austerity which interdicted all pleasures, even that of walking, which forbade travelling on Sunday, which persecuted men whose opinions were different from their own. The Bostonians unite simplicity of morals with that French politeness and delicacy of manners which render virtue more amiable. Music, which their teachers formerly proscribed as a diabolical art, begins to make part of their education. In houses you hear the forte-piano. This art, it is true, is still in its infancy, but the young novices who exercise it are so gentle, so complaisant, and so modest that the proud

perfection of art gives no pleasure equal to what they afford. God grant that the Bostonian women may never, like those of France, acquire the malady of perfection in this art! It is never attained but at the expense of the domestic virtues."

Opera in America has developed with the population of the country, and has depended to a very great extent upon the increase of railroad accommodations.

In the year 1800 each community depended upon itself. The means of communication were such as could be secured by water and by stage-coach, and with such limited conveniences the transportation of opera companies was practically impossible. There were few singers or musicians of any ability resident in America, and the voyage from Europe in a sailing vessel was an undertaking sufficiently unpleasant to prevent all except the most determined and adventurous votaries of the Muses.

Gas, which has been so important an item in theatrical matters, and which has in recent years been superseded by electricity, was introduced into Boston in 1822, and the New York Gas Lighting Company was started in 1823. For years after these events candles were still used for illuminating the theatres, and as late as 1845 people were attracted to a musical performance by an advertisement announcing that the hall would be lighted by one thousand candles.

The first railway in the United States, which was for the purpose of conveying granite from the quarries at Quincy, Mass., to tide water, for the building of the Bunker Hill Monument, was built in 1826–27 and was five miles long. In 1830 there were about nine railways constructed or in the process of construction — representing about one hundred and thirty miles. All except one were operated by horse-power.

From this modest beginning the railroads

grew until, in 1869, the Union Pacific was completed, and in 1885 the Canadian Pacific, while the railroad system generally extended over the country like a huge net, and made possible the transportation of large companies, baggage, scenery, and all the paraphernalia of a great opera company.

In those early days many of the Western cities were entirely unprepared for anything of the nature of opera. Cincinnati, for instance, now one of the most musical of the cities in the Middle — then Western — States, had about twenty thousand inhabitants in 1828, at which time Mrs. Trollope, the mother of the English novelist of that name, spent some years there. As an indication of Cincinnati's cultivation musical or otherwise, it will be at least amusing to quote a little incident related by Mrs. Trollope. After taking a lease of a house and occupying it, Mrs. Trollope, being unacquainted with the customs of the country, sent to the landlord, to

know what to do with the rubbish and refuse of her household. Said the landlord, "Your help will just have to pitch them all into the middle of the street, but you must mind, old woman, that it is the middle of the street. I expect you don't know as we have got a law what forbids throwing such things at the sides of the streets; they must just all be cast right into the middle, and the pigs soon takes them off."

When Charles Dickens came to this country in 1842, he visited Pittsburg, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Columbus, and other points which were then called "Western" cities. His journeys were made by canal-boats, river steamers, and stage-coaches. The railroad only extended from Baltimore as far as York. The journey from Cincinnati to St. Louis occupied four and a half days. These conditions were decidedly unfavourable to the promotion of enterprises requiring a large number of people, and artists whose weekly

salaries make necessary frequent performances in large places.

Notwithstanding the general backwardness of Boston in matters pertaining to artistic amusement, and the devotion of the inhabitants to psalmody and "fuguing tunes," there was sufficient interest in mundane affairs to justify the establishment of a theatre in Federal Street in 1794. Then came the Haymarket Theatre in 1796. During the season of 1797 the Federal Street Theatre was burned, and after being rebuilt was opened again in 1798. During the season of 1800–01 several plays were given, also the comic opera "Rosina," of which the libretto was by Mrs. Brook and the music by Shield.

In reviewing the operatic records of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, previous to 1825, — the ballad opera days, — one finds that the most popular operas were as follows: "The Beggar's Opera," by Gay and

Pepusch; "Love in a Village," by Bickerstaff and Doctor Arne; "Duenna," by Sheridan and Linley; "Clari, Maid of Milan," by John Howard Payne and Bishop; "Miller and His Men," by Bishop; "Inkle and Yarico," by Doctor Arnold; "Mountaineers," by Doctor Arnold; "No Song, No Supper," by Storace; "Paul and Virginia," by Mazzinghi.

There were also performances of Milton's "Masque of Comus," and Shakespeare's "The Tempest" with Purcell's music.

As a rule these operas were given by the stock companies of the various theatres, but several singers, well known in England, besides Mrs. Oldmixon, already mentioned, came to America, chief among them being Incledon and Phillips, who came in 1817–18. Stephen Woolls, Mr. Pearman, Mr. Darley, Miss Ellen Westray, Miss Leesugg, Mrs. Pownall, the Hallams, and the Hodgkinsons were all favourites.

In the year 1796 the first American opera

was produced, but there appears to be some difference of opinion as to what was the first American opera. According to W. G. Armstrong, of Philadelphia, it was called "The Archers, or Mountaineers of Switzerland," based on the story of William Tell; the libretto by William Dunlap, author of "The History of the American Theatre," and the music by Benjamin Carr, brother of Sir John Carr. First performed in New York April 18, 1796.

On the other hand, Esther Singleton, writing in the *Musical Courier*, gives as the first American opera, "Edwin and Angelina," libretto by Smith, music by Pellesier, but the date of the performance is given as December 19, 1796.

Another American opera was given in the following year, — "Bourville Castle," by Carr and Pellesier.

Salaries were not high, the leading singers receiving from $20 to $25 per week. Mrs.

Oldmixon is said to have received $37 per week, while the average compensation of the orchestral performers was about $10 per week.

CHAPTER II.

ENGLISH OPERA.

The ballad opera dragged out an existence almost to the middle of the century, though its popularity began to wane as English versions of Italian opera were set before the public. In 1819 an English version of Rossini's "Barber of Seville" was given, in which Miss Leesugg sang the part of Rosina, and this was followed some five years later by an English version of Weber's "Der Freischütz." Thus we may consider that from 1819 until 1847 was the period of English opera in America, — that is to say, of English versions of Italian and German operas, a form of entertainment which is periodically advocated and attempted, and

which has never met with permanent success since the establishment of Italian opera in Italian.

In New Orleans, French opera had taken root early and gradually developed. In 1808 a theatre was opened by a man named Croquet for the production of opera, drama, and ballet. This was followed five years later by a more pretentious edifice, in which operas were given three times a week, in the French language, while the off nights were devoted to plays. Artists were engaged abroad, chiefly in Paris, and presentations of an excellent quality were given.

In 1811 John Davis arrived in New Orleans from San Domingo, and soon occupied himself with an operatic enterprise, building a new opera-house, called the Theatre d'Orleans, which was opened in 1813. This theatre was burned in 1817, and the following year Mr. Davis opened a new one on the same ground, but on a much more preten-

tious scale, and the French grand opera was presented in the best style.

In 1827 the French Opera Company from New Orleans paid a visit to New York, with M. and Madame Alexandre as the stars, and in 1829 Mr. Davis, manager of the French Theatre at New Orleans, opened the Boston Theatre for a short season with his opera company, it being too early to risk a Southern climate with his recent transatlantic importation. "La Dame Blanche," and a vaudeville entitled "Werther," were brought out.

During the previous year (1828), "Der Freischütz" and "The Barber of Seville" were given in English at the Tremont Theatre, Boston, under the direction of Thomas Comer, the chief parts being taken by Miss Austin, Miss George, Mrs. Papanti, Comer, and Horn.

At this period one of the most popular singers in English opera was William Pear-

man, the baritone, who was born in Manchester, England, in 1792. He went to sea as a cabin boy, was wounded at the battle of Copenhagen, and then appeared unsuccessfully as an actor. He made his début in opera in 1817, and afterward sung at Drury Lane and Covent Garden. He is said to have been a very handsome man.

The year 1825 is memorable in the musical history of America, because it witnessed the first attempt to introduce Italian opera. Manuel Garcia, at the suggestion of one Dominick Lynch, a French wine-merchant, came to America with a company consisting of his own family, together with Crivelli, the tenor, Angrisani, the bass, De Rosich, and Madame Barbieri. Garcia can be considered the first of the tribe of impresarios known to America, but apart from his American experience he was a notable figure in the musical world.

Manuel del Popolo Vicente Garcia was

born in Seville in 1775, and at the age of six become a chorister at the cathedral. At seventeen he was already a well-known musician, — a composer, singer, actor, and conductor. His reputation being established at home, he sought new worlds to conquer, and in 1808 made his début in Paris, in Italian opera. In 1811 he returned to Italy, and became first tenor in the chapel of Murat, at Naples. Here he produced his opera "Califo di Bagdad," which was immensely successful. He went to London in 1816 and from that time until 1825 he fluctuated between London and Paris. In London he founded his famous school of singing, and became one of the foremost, if not the greatest, teachers of his time.

Among his most celebrated pupils were his own daughters, — Maria Felicité, better known as Madame Malibran, and Pauline, who married M. Viardot; Manuel Garcia, who also became celebrated as a teacher,

and Adolph Nourrit. Garcia was one of the greatest tenors of his day, but when he visited America in 1825 he was fifty years of age, and his best days had gone by. Nevertheless, the *Evening Post*, of New York, said, "Signor Garcia indulges in a florid style of singing, but with his fine voice, fine taste, admirable ear, and brilliancy of execution, we could not be otherwise than delighted."

Garcia presented, in New York, eleven Italian operas in one season, giving seventy-six representations. In 1827 he took his company to Mexico, leaving behind him, however, his eldest daughter, Maria, who had become the wife of Eugene Malibran, a New York merchant.

During his travels in Mexico Garcia presented eight operas, and amassed the sum of about $30,000, of which he was relieved in the most artistic and operatic manner by brigands, who tied him to a tree and made him sing for his life. Returning to Paris, he

now devoted himself to teaching, but his career ended in 1832.

Garcia was a man of great energy, and an excellent musician, besides being a remarkable singer and actor. Such was his popularity in London that his salary was raised from £260, in 1823, to £1,250 in 1825. He wrote more than forty operas, of which several were very successful.

Manuel Garcia, his son, was an excellent baritone, but was only twenty years of age when he accompanied his father to America. He quitted the operatic stage in 1829, and soon afterward undertook a careful scientific inquiry into the conformation of the vocal organs, the limits of registers, and the mechanism of singing. As a result of his studies in this direction he invented the laryngoscope, and wrote his "Mémoire sur la Voix Humaine," which he presented to the French Institute in 1840.

Garcia was now appointed professor of

singing at the Paris Conservatoire, and in 1847 published his "Traité Complet de l'Art du Chant," which has gained a world-wide reputation. In 1850 Garcia, having resigned his professorship at Paris, went to London, and was appointed professor at the Royal Academy of Music. For many years he was one of the leading professors in London. The following was published in 1901 :

"Manuel Garcia entered his ninety-seventh year, Sunday, March 17th, and thus, as he still gives a few lessons, he must be by far the oldest practising professor of music in the world. This year, for the first time, he has deemed it advisable to spend a portion of the winter in the South, but he is still in excellent health, and there is every reason to hope that the veteran will attain his centenary. What this great age means may partly be realised by the facts that as a child he had to leave his native Spain owing to the advance of Wellington's army in the Peninsular War;

and that it is over three-quarters of a century since he played Figaro, when his father first introduced regular Italian opera to New York music lovers."

Maria Garcia, better known as Madame Malibran, made her first appearance in opera at the age of sixteen, and when she came, with her father, to New York, she was but eighteen years of age. Her desire to escape from the severe discipline of her father led her to listen to the proposals of Mr. Malibran, and when, shortly after the marriage, Malibran became bankrupt, Garcia, who had reluctantly consented, was prevailed upon to leave the United States, lest he might be driven to some desperate act of vengeance.

Maria, on awakening from her brilliant dreams, found herself in a strange land, separated from her family, and married to a man who was not only unable to support her, but depended upon her talents for his existence.

She at once commenced the study of English, and appeared in English operas and English versions of Italian operas. Her success was beyond her hopes, and at each performance the manager of the theatre paid a handsome sum of money into the hands of Mr. Malibran for his wife's singing. Mr. Malibran now decided to send her to Europe, whence she should remit to him the money earned by her talents.

Eventually Madame Malibran secured a divorce from her husband and married De Bériot, the violinist. But her career was cut short by death when she was but twenty-eight years of age.

The Countess de Merlin, in writing of the visit of the Garcia opera company to America, says: "The principal individuals of the American opera company were Garcia, his daughter, his wife, and son; the others were merely auxiliaries." But Carlo Angrisani, the bass, was a distinguished

singer with a full, round, and sonorous voice. He was born at Reggio, in 1760, and was, therefore, a man of experience when he visited America in 1825. He had been associated with Fodor, Pasta, and other great singers of his day. The New York *Evening Post* expressed "our wonder and delight at the powerful low and mellow tones of Signor Angrisani's bass voice; or rather, of his most miraculous organ, of which we never before heard the equal." Both Angrisani and Rosich were in New York in 1828.

One of the most prominent characters in operatic matters of early days was Lorenzo da Ponte, who gloried in the fact that he was once the friend of Mozart, and the librettist, for that composer, of "Don Giovanni" and other operas.

Da Ponte's life was long and full of adventure. Born at Cenada, in the Venetian States, March 10, 1749, he was the child of very poor parents, and received no education

until he was fourteen years of age. He then attended, during five years, the seminary in his native town, after which period he set forth to seek his fortune by means of his pen, and for that purpose journeyed to Venice. But Da Ponte was restless, and fond of excitement, in which he indulged to such an extent that it became necessary for him to escape to Treviso. Here he became a professor of rhetoric, but, having given examples of his art to the detriment of the government, he found it advisable to seek refuge in Vienna, where he became noted for his talents and his intrigues.

In Vienna he found a former acquaintance in Salieri, the court capellmeister, who presented him to the Emperor Joseph II., and he was made court poet in place of Metastasio, then recently deceased. We are told that when Mozart, in 1786, gave a performance of "Idomeneo" at the palace of Prince Auersperg, "this mark of the favourable dis-

position of the aristocracy toward him bore fruit, attracting the attention of Lorenzo da Ponte, the well-known dramatist." As a result Da Ponte adapted the "Marriage of Figaro" of Beaumarchais, and Mozart composed the music. Then followed "Don Giovanni" and "Cosi fan Tutti."

On the death of the emperor, Da Ponte once more found it advisable to change his abode, and he went to Trieste, where he married an English lady. Finding himself unable to obtain suitable occupation, he proceeded to Paris, and thence to London, where he became a professor of the Italian language, and was appointed poet to the Italian Opera, then under the management of Taylor, who acquired an unenviable reputation in financial matters. In addition to his poetical duties, Da Ponte was employed to travel in Italy and hunt up singers.

In 1801 Da Ponte established himself in the business of selling Italian books in Lon

don, but having endorsed notes for Taylor, he became embarrassed financially. Under these circumstances life offered no further pleasures in London, and, having sent his wife in advance to the New World, Da Ponte took the first opportunity of following her. During eighty-six days the fugitive had full opportunity to enjoy freedom from financial cares in exchange for the physical sufferings of a tempestuous voyage. He reached Philadelphia safely, and, being refreshed by the democratic atmosphere of a new country, proceeded to New York, where he became a dealer in tobacco and drugs. Misfortune again overtaking him, he had recourse to his old profession of teaching Italian, and for a time he had many pupils.

Da Ponte was again going down-hill when Garcia arrived in New York with his opera company. The old man (he was now seventy-six) rushed to the lodgings of the singer, to whom he was in person, though not in repu-

tation, a stranger, and a thrilling scene followed. Da Ponte announced himself as the author of the libretto of "Don Giovanni" and the friend of the immortal Mozart. Garcia embraced him in true Italian style, and sang "Fin ch' han dal vina." Da Ponte was in the seventh heaven of delight when Garcia produced "Don Giovanni," and this, it is said, was his last happy day.

In 1832 Da Ponte succeeded in forming a good company in New York, which included Signora Pedrotti, Fornisari, and Montresor. This company played at the Bowery Theatre in the spring of that year, and in the following autumn at Richmond Hill, with an orchestra of nineteen instruments. Da Ponte survived, neglected and in deep poverty and misery, until 1838. His career was most romantic, and although he was several times able by his talents to secure enviable positions, he always wasted his opportunities by folly.

John Sinclair, the tenor, who came to America in 1831, was one of the most popular singers of his day. Rossini wrote for him the part of Idreno in "Semiramide," and he was the creator of the tenor rôles in several operas, and the composer of some well-known Scotch songs. Sinclair was born at Edinburgh in 1790, and became a clarinet player in a military band. He first appeared as a singer in London in 1810. He studied in Paris and Milan, and then sang in opera in Italy until 1823, when he returned to London. He sang in New York in 1831, and in Boston during the season 1832–33, when he appeared with Miss Hughes, Mrs. Austin, and Mrs. Barrymore at the Tremont Theatre. Soon after his visit to America he retired from the stage, and died at Margate in 1857.

In 1832 Mr. and Mrs. Wood arrived in New York, and sang in the chief cities, returning again in 1835 and in 1840. Mrs.

Wood was probably the most accomplished singer who had visited America up to that time, excepting Madame Malibran. Mrs. Wood is better known as Mary Ann Paton, and was a singer of much celebrity. A Boston account of her first appearance declares that "she held the audience spell-bound with the enchantment of her voice and its astonishing capability," a phrase which has since done noble duty in many papers, concerning many singers, all over the country, — but it was then, no doubt, a sincere expression of delight.

Mary Ann Paton was the daughter of a master in the high school of Edinburgh, who was also a good violin player. She was able to play the violin, the harp, and the piano when little more than four years of age, and when only eight appeared in concerts, singing, reciting, and dancing. She rapidly rose to the head of her profession, and became a most popular singer. In 1824

she married Lord William Pitt Lenox, an alliance which proved unhappy, and resulted in a divorce some seven years later. She then married Joseph Wood, a tenor singer, a tall, handsome man with an excellent, but not highly cultivated voice. Wood had been a pugilist, and it is said that he gained his bride by thrashing her noble husband, who treated her badly. Wood's rise to prominence as a singer was sudden and unexpected, but having gained a position, he was able to maintain it.

Mr. and Mrs. Wood crossed the Atlantic shortly after their marriage, and at once became popular. Mrs. Wood is said to have possessed a powerful voice of uncommon compass, agreeable in quality, though not sympathetic. Her vocalisation was good, her style brilliant, and as a bravura singer she was considered equal to all but the greatest Italian prima donnas of her day. She was what is known as a fine-looking woman, but

not handsome, her mouth being so large that when she opened it, it seemed cavernous. Her eyes were bright and her face pleasing.

While in America Wood was very punctilious concerning the respect due to his wife's talents, and frequently jeopardised his popularity by quarrelling with the press.

At New York, in 1835, the Woods gave the first performance (in English) of "La Sonnambula." During the same season one Mrs. Conduit appeared upon the stage, and soon found cause for a dispute which resulted in the retirement first, of the Woods, and then of Mrs. Conduit.

There are a few interesting anecdotes about the Woods, of which one is told by Mr. Clapp in his history of the Boston stage. It is related that when the Woods were in Philadelphia they were invited to a social entertainment by an ambitious hostess. Mrs. Wood was, in due course, asked to sing, which she politely but firmly refused to do

At last the hostess intimated that the invitation had been extended to her for the express purpose of entertaining the guests. Mrs. Wood then consented "as she had been asked professionally," and the next morning a bill for $200 was presented to the surprised hostess, with a gentle intimation that unless it was at once paid the amount would be collected by legal process.

When the Woods appeared in Boston in 1835, they did not meet with the success which had been anticipated. They had recently given "Sonnambula" in New York, and it had been extolled by the papers. They had not intended to give it in Boston, but finding that Bostonians were reserving their cash for that opera, they immediately put it into rehearsal, and owing to the indefatigable efforts of Mr. Comer, the musical director, "Sonnambula" was ready in two weeks, — a great undertaking, considering that every part had to be copied, and that the work was

entirely new to all except the principals. "La Sonnambula" had a brilliant run of twelve nights, and the Woods were so highly delighted with Mr. Comer, whose efforts had raised the receipts from $200 per night to an average of $665, that they presented him with — a silver snuff-box.

With the Woods came a singer, Miss Watson, whose musical ability was not great, and whose engagement terminated quickly. The popular curiosity concerning her had been artfully stimulated by a story to the effect that she had been sought in marriage by Paganini, the great violinist. She had been associated with him in his concerts in England, and had run away to Paris, where she was to meet him and be married. She was, however, captured by her father and taken home.

Miss Charlotte Cushman, the eminent tragedienne, was associated with the Woods in their operatic venture. Miss Cushman was

born in Boston, and developed good musical talent. She made her first public appearance at a social concert in 1830. During Mrs. Wood's engagement at Boston, Miss Cushman sang at one of her concerts, and Mrs. Wood, being pleased with her voice, which was a fine contralto, advised her to turn her attention to singing on the stage. The result was that Miss Cushman made her first appearance on the stage as the Countess in "The Marriage of Figaro," with the Woods, on April 8, 1835.

While the Woods were yet popular, and while opera in English still held the foremost place in the hearts of the American public, another talented couple arrived from England, viz., the Seguins.

Arthur Edward Sheldon Seguin was a bass singer of no small ability. He was a member of a talented musical family, his brother, William Henry, being a good concert and church singer, and his sister

Elizabeth also a singer of high reputation. Elizabeth Seguin, however, owes her chief distinction to the fact that she married a Pole named De Boyesku, and became the mother and teacher of Madame Parepa-Rosa, whose name was, at a later period, familiar to, and honoured by the music-loving public of this country as well as of England.

Arthur Seguin was born in 1809, in London, and was musically educated at the Royal Academy of Music, where he was first heard in concerts in 1828. After some preliminary operatic experience he was engaged at Covent Garden, Drury Lane, and the English Opera House, from 1830 to 1838. During his student days at the academy, he met Ann Childe, also a vocal student, who appeared in the same concerts with him, and met with equal success. In 1837, after becoming prominent as a concert singer, and having been "seconda donna" at the King's Theatre, she was engaged at Drury Lane,

where Seguin was also singing. They were married, and together sought fortune in the United States, arriving at New York in 1838. They formed an opera company and travelled extensively in the United States and Canada, enjoying a successful career until 1847, when Marti's Havana Company gave them their quietus, and assigned English opera to temporary neglect, or at least to a second place.

As late as 1846 the Seguin company sang the "Bohemian Girl" on five nights a week for two weeks, at the Howard Athenæum in Boston. A law existed which forbade theatrical performances on Saturday nights, and on those nights concerts were given. The "Bohemian Girl" became the rage, and the chief airs were sung on all social occasions, and even in the streets. It is said that at a large party a request was made for a song, and the ladies present being asked as to their repertoire, each and all responded with "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls."

Reaction set in, and the "Postilion of Longjumeau" was put on, Seguin making the most of the part of the postilion, which was afterward played so admirably by Wachtel. This was the last season of English opera in Boston for many years, and the house was packed night after night, although the roof leaked and the building was almost in a state of collapse. On February 25th, about twenty minutes after the close of the performance, the Howard Athenæum was found to be on fire, and it was soon burned to the ground.

During Seguin's peregrinations he had the honour of being elected chief of a tribe of Indians, and was burdened with a name signifying, "The man with the deep, mellow voice." Seguin wore his voice out by singing every night, and before his death, which occurred in New York in 1852, he appeared as a low comedian at Wallack's Theatre, much to the sorrow of his friends, who were grieved to witness such a close to a brilliant

career. Mrs. Seguin remained in New York as a music-teacher, and died there in 1888. The Seguins gave the first performance of "Don Pasquale" in America, at New York in 1843.

Contemporary with the Seguins, and members of their company, were Miss Jane Shireff and Miss Elizabeth Poole. The former lady was a better actress than the majority of singers, and had first appeared as an opera singer at Covent Garden in 1831. Her career was brilliant, for her voice was full-toned and powerful, especially in the higher notes. She became a great favourite in America, being young and good looking in addition to her other merits. On her return to England she married and retired from the stage. She died in 1883.

A unique morsel of musical criticism appeared in the *New York Mirror* concerning Miss Shireff's appearance in an opera entitled "Amilie, or the Love Test."

"This is one of the gems scattered with no unsparing hand through the opera. The adagio in E, four sharps, major, is perfectly thrilling. The words 'Thou art gone,' with the response of the wind instruments, cannot be too highly appreciated, and a brilliant polonaise forms a happy termination. The scene was given by Miss Shireff with a pathos and effect quite startling. Her clear, bell-toned upper notes rang out like a trumpet. . . . The moment Mr. Seguin opened his mouth, the corresponding feature of the audience assumed the same appearance; one universal gape seemed to affect all: such was the astonishment produced by his magnificent organ. . . . There is no straining after double F's, or S's, or D's; they come round and full and harmonious. His aria, 'My boyhood's home,' is a composition replete with genius and expression, and caused an immediate sensation. Amilie here rushes in to claim the assistance of her friends against

the persecution of Jose in her recent calamity."

Elizabeth Poole was a mezzo-soprano, though she is spoken of as a contralto. Her voice was "smooth and round as her person," and of sympathetic quality; her manners also were charming by their simplicity. She was born in London in 1822, and enjoyed a stage career from 1834 to 1870. She married a Mr. Bacon.

Rivafinoli was an operatic manager of the season of 1833–34 in New York. He collected an excellent stock company, of which Clementina Fanti and Luisa Bordogni were the leading attractions. Fanti, the soprano, was not in her first youth, but was possessed of a graceful figure, good intonation, and perfect execution. Bordogni, the contralto, became a great favourite on account of her skilful management of a sweet but feeble voice, and of her youth and modesty. She was the daughter of a Parisian tenor of renown.

The orchestra consisted of the most accomplished musicians of the city. Willent, the bassoon, not only captured the audience with the magic of his instrument, but also succeeded in leading Bordogni captive to the hymeneal altar.

Carolini, the double-bass, appears to have been a man of remarkable ability, for we are told that, while playing the most difficult passages, he would gaze around the house and stare at the pretty women with consummate impudence.

As years rolled on and singers returned to Europe with good stores of American dollars, other singers of still greater renown were tempted to cross the Atlantic, but it generally happened that these singers did not embark upon such a great undertaking until their best days had gone by. John Braham, for instance, came to American when he was quite an old man. Madame Caradori-Allan was perhaps the most brilliant

singer who had appeared, *i. e.*, she had the most brilliant European reputation. She was a native of Milan, born in 1800, the daughter of an Alsatian who had been a colonel in the French army, — Baron de Munck, — who died while she was still young. Maria Caterina Rosalbina was the full name of the young singer. She was educated musically by her mother, and when she was obliged to turn her musical gifts to account she appeared under her mother's maiden name,— Caradori. In 1822 she appeared in London, and at once became a great favourite, her career continuing without a cloud until the advent of Grisi, after which she confined herself to concerts. Her voice was exceedingly sweet and flexible, and her style almost faultless. Her manner was modest and unassuming, and while she never astonished, she always pleased her audience. She was a beautiful woman with large blue eyes and golden hair, a complexion of milk and roses, and a fine figure.

Madame Caradori-Allan was the first star to appear at Niblo's Garden, New York, in 1837, when she sang the part of Rosina in the "Barber of Seville." She remained in America until 1839. She was the soprano soloist at the first performance of Mendelssohn's "Elijah" at Birmingham, in 1846. She died in 1865.

It is worthy of note that during this season of 1839, Beethoven's "Fidelio" held the boards for fourteen nights consecutively, in New York. From 1839 to 1843 there was nothing new in operatic matters. The Woods, the Seguins, Braham, Giubelei, Manvers, and others of lesser note had full sway. But in 1843 new stimulant was provided by the arrival of Madame Cinti-Damoreau, and by a visit to the East of the French Opera Company from New Orleans. In connection with this French company it is interesting to note that the chief attraction was Mlle. Calvé, a graceful, flexible, light soprano,

perfectly cultivated, and equally charming as a singer and an actress. She was slight, petite, had an expressive face, and became a great favourite.

Madame Damoreau toured the United States as a concert singer with the violinist Artôt, but in the following year she appeared in opera in New York during Palmo's management.

Laure Cinthie Montalant was born at Paris in 1801, studied both voice and piano at the Conservatoire, which institution she entered at the age of seven, and when eighteen was engaged for second parts at the Théâtre Italien. In 1821 she was assigned to principal parts, and the following year she appeared in London, where, in spite of youth, beauty, pleasing manners, and unaffected acting, she created little sensation. On the arrival of Rossini in Paris she appeared at the Grand Opera and was completely successful. In 1829 she took part

with Sontag and Malibran in "Il Matrimonio Segreto," and was declared to be one of the best singers the world had known. Rossini and Auber wrote for her, and for several years she had a brilliant career. She married an unsuccessful actor named Damoreau, in Brussels, but the union did not prove happy. In 1834 Madame Damoreau was appointed professor of singing at the Paris Conservatoire, and held the position until 1856, after which she retired to Chantilly, where she died in 1863.

An American account of Madame Damoreau says that "the quality of her voice was exceedingly sweet, and the mingled liquidness and truth of her chromatics could never have been exceeded. With none of the passion of Malibran, she reached a finer fibre of the ear."

Ferdinand Palmo, who was for a time an operatic manager in New York, was a little Italian, with a long nose and sharp chin, and

had kept a popular restaurant in Broadway. He accumulated a moderate fortune, which he determined to risk in an attempt to give Italian opera. Having learned prudence from the failure of Rivafinoli, he leased a modest building in Chambers Street, furnished it with hard wooden benches, and opened his opera-house in 1844.

Palmo's first prima donna was Signora Borghese, a good but not a great singer, with considerable declamatory power, and attractive appearance.

New York fell in love with Signora Borghese, who dressed marvellously, and had an attractiveness due to intellect rather than beauty. She was graceful, vivid, a capital actress, and sang with a birdlike abandon, so that one was enchanted even with her defects.

The tenor was Antignoni, who was regarded as an artist of the first class, with a voice of moderate range but exquisite quality,

pure vocalisation, manly and noble style, and exceptional dramatic power. Indeed, it is stated that no tenor, not excepting Mario and Salvi, could equal him. His career in America was short, for his voice was one which could not be depended on, and would sometimes desert him in the midst of a performance. Yet he was a conscientious artist.

Palmo's venture came to an end in 1847. His wit was not as sharp as his chin, says a historian, and so his career was not as long as his nose, — and yet a nose which takes three years to pass by would be generally regarded as a remarkable proboscis.

Other singers who appeared about this time were Emma Albertazzi, Perozzi, and Valtellina. Of these only Emma Albertazzi was of international reputation, and she did not fulfil in her career the early promises of success. Born in England in 1814, she was the daughter of a music-teacher named Howson. She began singing in opera at the age

of sixteen, and her promise was so great that her father took her to Italy, where she quickly fell in love with, and married, a lawyer named Albertazzi. She had an agreeable presence and a musical voice, but lacked in animation upon the stage, and thus wearied her audiences. Her career continued until 1846, and in the following year she died of consumption.

A good description of the Park Theatre of New York, in which most of the operatic performances were given for many years, is left by Richard Grant White, and in these days of gorgeous decorations, luxurious cushions, and ample spaces in the lobbies, it is well worth repeating.

"No public building, nôt indecently dirty or unhealthily exposed, could be less suited to the assemblage of elegant people than the Park Theatre. It was in all respects the very reverse of the splendid house which had just opened and closed under the manage-

ment of the Cavaliere Rivafinoli. Its boxes were like pens for beasts. Across them were stretched benches consisting of a mere board covered with faded red moreen, a narrower board, shoulder high, being stretched behind to serve for a back. But one seat on each of the three or four benches was without even this luxury, in order that the seat itself might be raised upon its hinges for people to pass in and out. These sybaritic enclosures were kept under lock and key, by a fee-expecting creature, who was always half drunk, except when he was wholly drunk. The pit, which has in our modern theatres become the parterre, the most desirable part of the house, was in the Park Theatre hardly superior to that in which the Jacquerie of old stood upon the bare ground (*par terre*), and thus gave the place its French name. The floor was dirty and broken into holes, the seats were bare, backless benches. Women were never seen in the pit, and although the excellence

of the position and the cheapness of admission took gentlemen there, few went who could afford to study comfort and luxury in their amusements. The place was pervaded with evil smells, and not uncommonly, in the midst of the performance, rats ran out of the holes in the floor and across into the orchestra. This delectable place was approached by a long underground passage, with bare whitewashed walls, dimly lighted, except at a sort of booth, at which vile fluids and viler solids were sold. As to the house itself it was the dingy abode of dreariness. The gallery was occupied by howling roughs, who might have taken lessons in behaviour from the negroes who occupied a part of this tier, which was railed off for their particular use. Such was the principal theatre in New York in 1840, and for ten years afterward."

An event of great importance was the production in 1845 of the opera "Leonora,"

composed by William Henry Fry. Although other American operas had been written and performed, this was the first which was considered worthy of the name. Besides those already mentioned, and many not mentioned, an enterprising musician produced an opera in 1825 with the peculiarly suggestive name of "The Sawmill." It did not please.

Mr. Fry's opera was an ambitious work, and was, moreover, the work of an intelligent musician, but was not very successful.

William Henry Fry was a native of Philadelphia, and was born in 1815. On finishing his education he became an editorial writer for the *Philadelphia Gazette*, which paper was published by his father. His opera "Leonora" was written before he went to Europe to complete his musical education. While he was abroad, from 1846 to 1852, he acted as foreign correspondent for several newspapers, including the *New York Tribune*, of which he afterward became musical editor.

On his return to America in 1852, Mr. Fry gave a series of illustrated musical lectures in New York City, on a grand scale, employing, for the purpose of illustration, a chorus of one hundred Italian singers, an orchestra of eighty, and a military band of fifty performers. In doing this he sacrificed thousands of dollars without being able to establish his theories.

Mr. Fry composed two symphonies and several other works, and he was a musical enthusiast to the end of his life. He was the first man to establish telephonic communication between his house and the theatre, for the purpose of hearing operatic performances which his physical infirmities prevented him from attending in person. Propped up in bed, with the score of the opera, and surrounded by the photographs of the singers, he listened to the music by means of his telephone. When a passage pleased him he would applaud by patting the photograph of

the singer, or when a false note was given he would turn the photograph of the culprit upside down, as a mark of disapproval. After suffering poor health for some time, Mr. Fry went to Santa Cruz, in the West Indies, where he died December 21, 1864. Mr. Fry was one of the most vigorous promoters of operatic enterprise, and did more for the art in this country than any one man of his day.

European revolutions have generally worked for the musical welfare of the United States, for expatriated musicians have always sought safety by crossing the Atlantic, and many have become good American citizens. Thus we are told that at the end of the eighteenth century the musicians of the theatrical orchestras were principally French, most of them being gentlemen who had seen better days, but had been driven from Paris by the Revolution, — nobles and officers in the army of the king.

Half a century later the disturbed political condition of Europe caused the advent of many excellent musicians, refugees, and outlaws from their native lands. While the establishment of opera was chiefly due to American enterprise, it was carried on by the employment of foreign singers and musicians, of whom many came to this country as refugees.

CHAPTER III.

ITALIAN OPERA. — MAX MARETZEK.

In 1847 Italian opera took another stride forward, and from that date may be considered to have become a permanent enterprise. The celebrated Havana Opera Troupe made a tour of the principal cities of the United States, and gave performances such as had not been witnessed since the Garcia period, if even then. Many of the singers and musicians of this company remained in America, at least for a number of years, and their names appear frequently in operatic records.

The Havana Opera Company was organised by Don Francesco Marty y Torrens, who had amassed a fortune ostensibly as a

vendor of fish, though it was said that in his younger days Marty's associations had not been of the best, — in short, that he had been a pirate. Through services of a not too creditable nature, rendered to his government at the expense of his associates, he had been granted a monopoly of the fish business of the island of Santiago, and nobody had a right to sell fish without paying a tax to Marty. He became rich, built fishing-boats for his business, and embarked in the slave trade. Eventually he was made a "noble" by the Spanish government.

He now built a fine opera-house, and engaged an excellent company, but as he was unpopular, the Spaniards would not, at first, go to his theatre, so he closed its doors to the public, and enjoyed the opera in the society of a few chosen friends only, until a better feeling was established. During the season of heat and yellow fever, this company went to New York and other American

cities, and met with such success that still finer singers were engaged, and the company of 1848 is recorded as "really great."

The most important feature of the company of 1847 was that it contained two musicians who became very celebrated, — Luigi Arditi, the conductor and violinist, and Bottesini, the double-bass virtuoso. When not engaged with operatic performances, these two, with other members of the company, gave many concerts, both in the great cities and in places which could not afford the luxury of opera.

Arditi's career covered nearly half a century, much of which was spent in America, where he married an American lady. Under his baton many singers, afterward celebrated, made their débuts. Theodore Thomas, whose name is familiar to all American music lovers, played first violin under Arditi, and few men had a wider circle of acquaintances or have been more deservedly popular.

Arditi was born at Crescentino, Piedmont, in 1822, and was from his infancy a devotee of the musical art. At the age of seven he begged his father to give him a violin in preference to any toy, and such was his promise that the musical community of his native town generously persuaded his father to make any pecuniary sacrifice of which he was capable to develop the boy's talents. After four years' study the young musician succeeded in getting together an orchestra, composed of two violins, one double-bass, one clarinet, and one trombone, which he conducted, playing first violin himself. At the age of twelve he was made a member of the orchestra at the theatre in Crescentino, a position which he lost by falling asleep and smashing his violin.

A new violin having been procured after some delay, he went to Turin to continue his studies, and thence to Milan, where he entered the conservatoire and became the com-

panion of such men as Yotti, Bottesini, and Piatti, who all became great artists.

In 1838 Arditi took first prize at the conservatoire, and was embraced by the venerable Rolla. When Emperor Ferdinand was crowned, Bottesini, Piatti, and Arditi were among the soloists at the Austrian court festivities. In 1840 Arditi wrote his first opera, and in 1843 he secured his first conductorship at Vercelli. The following year he was appointed conductor of the orchestra at the Teatro Ré, Milan, which post he held for two years. He was presented by the Duke Antonio Litta with a most valuable Stradivarius violin, and at the house of this duke Arditi and Bottesini met Cesare Badiali, the singer, who was acting as agent for Marty, and securing talent for the Havana Company. Badiali induced them to relinquish their plan of visiting England, and to try their fortune in the New World. Ten years elapsed before Arditi returned to Europe,

and then several more years passed before his return to America with Mapleson. In the meantime he was engaged as conductor, chiefly in London, though he went as far as Turkey, where he conducted opera before the Sultan. He conducted the opera at the festival performances in honour of the marriage of the Princess Royal in 1858, and played in the royal band at Windsor Castle at the marriage of King Edward, then Prince of Wales, to the Princess Alexandra of Denmark. He became more widely known than any operatic conductor before or since.

Among the singers of the Havana Company, Signora Fortunata Tedesco was the bright particular star, and was noted for her great beauty and her rich, voluptuous voice, — a mezzo-soprano. Although she was deficient in technique, she was an effective singer, and, after her American career, was successful in Europe. On account of her parentage she had been unable to secure an engagement at

FORTUNATA TEDESCO.

Milan, but Badiali, recognising her merits, selected her for his company, and she amply justified his choice. Tedesco at first created such a *furore* in Boston that, when she sang, premiums of four and five dollars were paid for seats, but on her second visit she did not arouse the same enthusiasm. Signora Tedesco travelled in the care of her father, who so scrupulously guarded her interests that he is said to have carried in his pocket a small pair of scales with which he carefully weighed each coin of his daughter's salary as it was received from the manager.

Tedesco is described as a great, handsome, ox-eyed creature, the picture of lovely laziness until she was excited by music, and then she poured out floods, or rather gusts, of rich, clear sound. She had a noble voice, a beautiful head, she sang well enough and acted not quite so well, was charming at times, brilliant at others, pleasing always, and always pretty.

Perelli, the tenor, was an excellent musician and sang well. After a time he settled in Philadelphia, where he did much to improve the taste of the public and extend their knowledge of vocal music.

Cesare Badiali had made a brilliant reputation in Italy, Spain, and Austria, and was considered a very distinguished basso-cantante. His voice retained its beauty till he was well advanced in life, and for his last ten years he resided and sang in Paris. He was regarded as one of the most satisfactory singers ever heard in America, — always earnest, always correct and effective. Badiali was noted for a peculiar accomplishment, — he could, while drinking a glass of claret, and during the act of swallowing it, sing a scale in a loud voice, and without missing a note or a drop of wine.

Colonel Clapp's account of the Havana Company's appearance in Boston says: "There was a superb orchestra led by Arditi

and Bottesini, a good chorus, excellent principals. All recollections of English opera were effaced by this life-breathing, passionate, and effective performance, and from that hour a new ideal of excellence in operatic affairs became fixed and irrevocable. The public was well-nigh frenzied with delight."

The Havana Company, however, did not have a monopoly of the operatic field in 1847, for there were other companies. Palmo's Opera House was opened in New York under the management of Patti, Sanquirico, and Pogliani. Signor Benedetti first came to America with this company, which included Clotilde and Antonio Barili, and Sanquirico, a buffo.

The Barilis were children of Catarina Barili, a prima-donna of the old school, who had been much admired in Europe, and was, when she came to America, a very fine singer. She married the tenor Patti, and became the mother of Carlotta and Adelina.

Clotilde Barili had a soprano voice, notable for its compass, but it was thin though pure. She could sing with ease F sharp in alt, but being cold and tame, she made little impression. She was attractive, however, and married a man of considerable fortune.

Antonio Barili was for some fifteen years a teacher of singing, but eventually returned to Italy discontented with America.

Sanquirico, the buffo and operatic manager, was a man of much comic power. He is said to have resembled the familiar "Mr. Punch," and he had a cackling voice which never failed to produce mirth. He was much esteemed for his intelligence and his character. He is said to have excelled in "Don Pasquale."

Salvatore Patti was the father of Adelina Patti, who became a world-wide celebrity. He was also the stepfather of Clotilde Barili, and of Antonio Barili, who was later associated with Strakosch for some time.

Palmo's Opera House being too far down-town, a new house was built in Astor Place, known as the Astor Place Opera House, and was opened by Patti and Sanquirico in November, 1847. Although its existence as an opera-house was brief, it was the scene of important events. Here Amalia Patti, an older sister of Adelina, made her début. When Strakosch, the impresario, came to New York, she became his wife. A brother of Sims Reeves, the celebrated tenor, was also in this company. But the events connected with this house will appear in due order.

One of the chief celebrities to appear in New York in 1847 was Madame Anna Bishop, — at the Park Theatre. Her voice was a brilliant, high soprano, but without much of the sympathetic quality.

Born in London in 1814, she was the daughter of a singing-master named Rivière, and was educated at the Royal Academy of

Music. After seven years of student life she married Sir Henry Bishop, the composer, and immediately commenced her professional career by singing at the Philharmonic and other concerts. Eight years after her marriage she went on a tour with Bochsa, the harpist, a handsome but unprincipled man, with whom she eventually eloped. She was renowned for her beauty, but was twenty-eight years younger than Bishop, of whom she was the second wife. From the time of her elopement she was continually travelling, and was one of the greatest travellers among *prime donne* of her time, visiting Europe, Asia, Australia, South America, and the Sandwich Islands, besides almost every city of any size in the United States. During one of her voyages between Honolulu and China she was shipwrecked, and sustained considerable loss.

Sir Henry Bishop died in London in 1855, and about the same time Bochsa, who was

travelling in Australia with his wife, also died. Madame Bishop visited South America and found her way to New York, where she eventually settled down and became a vocal teacher. In New York she made a third matrimonial venture, choosing a gentleman named Schulz, who is said to have borne a striking resemblance to Prince Bismarck.

Without being one of the greatest artists of the world, Madame Bishop was probably more universally known throughout the world than any other singer of her day. She could sing in many languages with marvellous facility, and it was said of her that "no woman has ever been able to personate heroes of the Othello and Tancredi stamp with that absolute embodiment which Madame Bishop invariably presented." At the age of seventy, the year of her death, she was still an attractive singer.

Another singer of 1847 was a Boston lady, the daughter of a musician named Ostinelli

who had married Miss S. Hewitt, organist of the Handel and Haydn Society from 1820 to 1829. Miss Ostinelli was known as Signora Biscaccianti. She met with some success in New York and Boston, and afterward sang a good deal in Europe.

Signora Biscaccianti married a 'cellist named Bianchi, with whom she went to San Francisco in 1852, but the union was not a happy one, and they separated. Signora Bianchi was in San Francisco in 1860 and sang in the choir at Trinity Church. In 1861 she started an opera company with local talent, but became so poor that she was obliged to accept an engagement with a minstrel show. She left San Francisco in 1864, and went to Peru, where she made some money. In 1878 she was living in Milan as a vocal teacher.

In 1851 Madame Anna Thillon arrived in this country, and while she made her greatest successes in light opera, and is not

strictly to be classed amongst the singers of grand opera, she is entitled to mention for the reason that she was the first person to give opera in San Francisco.

Madame Thillon was a native of London, and her maiden name was Hunt. She was born in 1819, and at the age of fourteen went to France with her mother and sister, and began to study under Bordogni, Tadolini, and Thillon, who was the conductor of the Havre Philharmonic Society. When only fifteen years old she became Madame Thillon, and soon afterward appeared with success at Havre, Clermont, and Nantes, the result of which was an engagement at the Théâtre de la Renaissance in Paris, where she appeared for the first time in 1838.

Madame Thillon's voice was a soprano *sfogato*, or, in other words, an acute, thin voice of marvellous *timbre* and with a range of two and a half octaves. She was also possessed of much personal charm, and be-

came popular to a remarkable degree. She appeared in England in 1844 and was as successful as in Paris, being engaged there every year until the end of her career, with the exception of the three years which she spent in America. Mr. Armstrong, of Philadelphia, did not altogether approve of her, for he declares that her success was more due to her pretty face than to her vocal powers, which were limited and of no very high order. Her career came to a sudden termination one night when she was singing at the Lyceum Theatre in London in 1856. She was taken ill, and the performance ceased abruptly. After that she occasionally sang in concert, her last appearance in public taking place in 1867. The remainder of her life was spent at Torquay, in the south of England.

Madame Bishop gave opera in San Francisco in 1855, and the Richings company was in San Francisco in 1864, with Caroline Rich-

ings, soprano, Mrs. Zelda Seguin, contralto, and in the following year there was a company including Morelli, Barili, Sbriglia and Adelaide Phillips. Twenty-four operas were given during a season of three months. Sbriglia is to-day one of the most prominent vocal teachers in Paris.

Musicans were not long in discovering the gold-bearing soil of California, and, notwithstanding the long journey across the alkali deserts and the mountains, in stage-coaches or wagons, many of them followed the "rush," but few succeeded in making a fortune. Indeed, it appears that most of them were glad enough to get away safely, and some did not even succeed to that extent. California was not ready for anything musical, which could be classed as "art," for many years, and even in the '70's, when San Francisco was a big city, everything musical was very crude. At some of the best theatres the mediæval custom of beating a bass drum at

the door before the performance, as a means of summoning an audience, was still in practice.

Opera entered upon a new phase of its career with the advent of Max Maretzek to New York in 1848. The management of the opera was at that time in the hands of Mr. E. P. Fry, the brother of the composer, and the musical conditions existing in New York made a strong impression upon the new impresario, who found, as he said, "two musical institutions in New York, — the Philharmonic Society, which had just condemned an overture of Berlioz as 'nonsense,' and the Italian Opera, the failure of which had flourished for the past twenty-five years."

"Although continually 'bursting up,' Italian opera flourished in the United States, and, what is more, continues to flourish." So said Maretzek in 1855, and his words have applied equally well to the subject ever

since. One impresario after another has been ruined, — some several times, — and most have died poor, yet there are still to be found enthusiasts with ever greater ideas who are willing and anxious to speculate upon the fickle wishes of the public.

Maretzek gives the following vivid description of the opera band as he found it on his arrival in New York:

"The orchestra consists of about thirty-six performers on their individual instruments. They had a leader, Signor Lietti, who did not apparently consider it necessary to indicate the movement by beating the time. On the contrary, he was occupied in playing the first violin part, fully unconscious of the other instruments in the orchestra. But I wrong him. In order to guide them he was possessed with the monomania of playing more loudly and vigorously upon his fiddle than any of his subordinates. He trampled on the floor as though he had been

determined to work a path through the deal planking, and made a series of most grotesque faces with his nose, mouth, and eyes. In the meantime the other fiddlers, not being willing to allow Signor Lietti's violin a greater preponderance of sound, exerted themselves with a purely musical ferocity, which you have never seen equalled. It was necessary, however, that Lietti should be heard by the wind instruments. He therefore began to *scrape* his fiddle. . . . After the first eighty bars of the *allegro* movement you would, undoubtedly, have believed that you were surrounded by a series of saw-mills in vigorous operation. Under such circumstances the leader, of course, could not be heard. They soon came out of time, and confusion ensued. Everybody felt himself individually called upon to restore order. A squeak from the piccolo would be heard, followed by a loud squall from all the wind instruments, trying to indicate a place for

reunion. Then came a broadside from the trombones and horns, to restrain the already too far advanced violins. It was in vain. The screech from the first trumpet was of no use. Even the kettle-drum player, who began to beat the right time *fortissimo* on his instrument, was totally unable to stay the confusion. Each one made his own way and made his own speed. At last, straggling and worn out, one after the other, some few were completely distanced, and Signor Lietti by no means first in, they terminated the overture."

Maretzek now took up the duties of conductor, the orchestra was increased to forty-three performers, and a method of conducting more consistent with the dignity of the situation was inaugurated.

The company included Signora Truffi and Madame Laborde as *prime donne;* Benedetti and Arnoldi, tenors; while Amalia Patti, Valtelina, Giubelei (whose wife was a dancer),

Signor Rossi, and Salvatore Patti were also members.

Max Maretzek was a native of Moravia, having been born at Brünn, in 1821 (June 28), and the early years of his life were devoted to a preparation for the medical profession. He was matriculated as a medical student at the University of Vienna, but music was too great an attraction, and he soon gave up the study of medicine and applied himself to the study of his favourite art. In 1843 he produced an opera, — "Hamlet," — and immediately started upon a tour as a musical director. His wanderings took him through Germany, France, and England, and in 1844 he found employment in London as the assistant of Balfe, who was conductor at Her Majesty's Theatre. Four years later he became conductor of the opera at the Astor Place Opera House in New York, and the following season he also undertook the management. Under his management many

well-known singers were brought to America, several operas were given for the first time in this country, and a few new ones produced.

Maretzek's struggles with boards of directors, capricious artists, and rival impresarios endured for about thirteen years, his last venture as impresario having been when in 1860 he carried on a season of opera at the Winter Garden in New York. He continued in active life, however, for many years, appearing frequently as conductor. He also brought out, in 1879, an American opera entitled "Sleepy Hollow," the text by Charles Gaylor, and he wrote a considerable quantity of music, including several successful songs.

On February 12, 1889, the fiftieth anniversary of his career as a conductor in America was celebrated at the Metropolitan Opera House, when Theodore Thomas, Anton Seidl, Frank Van der Stucken, Adolf Neuendorff,

Walter Damrosch, and a notable company of musicians gathered together to do him honour.

Maretzek died in New York, September 17, 1897. He left two interesting volumes of his experiences, and was at work on a third, which, however, was never completed.

Madame Laborde, a prima-donna of Maretzek's, who spent two years in America, was a native of Paris, and was educated at the Conservatoire. Her maiden name was Rosina Debies. In 1840 she made her operatic début while yet in her teens. During the second year of her career, while singing in Brussels, she fell in love with the tenor in the same company, whose name was Laborde, and was soon afterward married to him. After a career of some four years more in Europe, the Labordes crossed the Atlantic and reached New York in time to join Maretzek's company, and during her two years in America she sang in the prin-

cipal cities of the United States and Canada. Returning to Paris, she was engaged for seven years at the Grand Opéra, and then made a tour through Spain, Italy, and South America; afterward she sang for a time at Moscow, where she became a professor of singing at the School of Music.

Returning to Paris, she gave up her public career and engaged in teaching, which occupation she has followed until the present day.

Signora Truffi was a favourite among the operatic artists of the second rank, who have visited America. She was not a great singer, nor a finished vocalist, but she possessed a sympathetic quality which always charmed her audience. Her voice has been described as noble, but with a bad break which always appeared when she ran the scale. Her success was largely due to her beauty and to her acting. One critic declared that she suggested the statue of a good and beautiful

Roman empress, if such a person ever existed. She bore herself upon the stage as absolutely unconscious of her beauty. Truffi was greatest in tragic parts, and was considered, as a whole, the greatest Lucrezia America had seen, not excepting Grisi. Richard Grant White says that to hear her and see her in this part was like reading Italian history with living illustrations. "In the scene in which Lucrezia resents Don Alfonzo's severe treatment of her favourite Gennaro, Truffi seemed to embody the spirits of all the Italian viragoes of the *cinque cento* period. There was a weight and grandeur in her wrath, due in part to her personal magnificence, but no less to her union of a large and simple style with great impetuosity of passion, which gave her an air of irresistibility.

Maretzek's account of Signora Truffi is not quite the same. The difference can no doubt be accounted for by the point of view.

Maretzek had business dealings with her, and she gave him more or less trouble. She was careful, he says, to avoid all parts which did not, in her opinion, suit her. He admits that she was a lady of prepossessing appearance, and an artist of good capability, with a rich mezzo-soprano voice. But he denies the sympathetic quality, and declares that she was not one of those who could arouse any great enthusiasm.

Signora Teresa Truffi married Signor Benedetti, who by his excellent singing, an account says, "swept away the memory of all previous tenors." Benedetti was a man of imposing presence, with a powerful though not highly cultivated voice. His face, with shapeless nose and little Chinese-looking eyes, was almost ugly, but his voice appealed to the heart, his bearing was manly, women worshipped him, and men admired him. His great part was Edgardo in "Lucia." After her marriage Signora Truffi's voice lost its

remarkable purity and flexibility, and her acting became indifferent.

The bass of the company was Signor Rossi, who sang Alfonso to Truffi's Lucrezia. Mr. White says his face had not the demi-god-like beauty of Fornisari's (a bass of former days), but it was handsome, strong, and manly, and his figure was like Jove's, — towering, majestic, yet graceful. He sang always well, always correctly, and always in good taste, but he was not admirable except upon the stage and in action. His place was that of a fitting companion to Truffi; as in a pair of statuettes, one, of which the beauty may be undeniable, has yet its chief value as the fellow of the other.

Rossi, Benedetti, and Truffi, with some other members of Maretzek's company, formed an opposition company, and thereby caused that gentleman some anxiety. His view of their capabilities conveys a different impression from that expressed by Mr. White.

For instance, of Rossi he says, that Rossi was a man of great size, standing six feet in his stockings, and measuring thirty inches from shoulder to shoulder, but his greatness was made manifest more in his person than in his singing. "Before he commenced singing," says Maretzek, "he would draw a long breath, put himself in fighting attitude, and then rush to the footlights. Expectation thus raised to a high pitch was doomed to disappointment."

The season was full of trouble. Signora Truffi and Signori Benedetti and Rossi having formed a combination for the purpose of forcing Mr. Fry, the manager, to accede to various demands, Mr. Fry sent to his brother, who was in Europe, for a new supply of singers. Signora Truffi refused to sing "Norma," but Madame Laborde took her place, and she was vanquished. Signor Benedetti went through a course of ailments and exercised all his ingenuity to embarrass the

management, so that matters had reached a thrilling climax when the long-expected singers arrived from abroad. They were at once put on to sing "Ernani," but owing to various circumstances the performance stands on record as one of the most ridiculous exhibitions ever given upon the New York stage.

Signora Fasciotti, the new soprano, was a woman of great beauty but little artistic merit; Ferrari, the tenor, was almost paralysed with fright; Castrone, the basso, had apparently never before appeared on any stage; and Tafanelli, the baritone, was the only one whose performance was satisfactory. He remained for several years in America.

Thus ended the opera season, but the troubles of the opera-house were not over, for, owing to a dispute between Macready and Forrest, the actors, the house was mobbed by fifteen thousand people; the militia were called out, and, being unable to disperse the mob in any other way, fired upon it with fatal

result, and the house, was afterward called the "Massacre Place Opera House."

Maretzek now became manager of the Astor Place house and went to Europe in search of talent. He secured Signora Borghese, Signori Forti, Guidi, Beneventano, Novelli, and others, to whom he added Signora Truffi and Mlle. Bertucca, who had been members of the Fry company. With them he gave sixty consecutive performances without a single postponement or alteration of the progammes.

Mlle. Bertucca is mentioned by Arditi as a charming singer, who made a successful appearance as Desdemona in Rossini's "Otello." She created a great sensation in her rendering of the famous "Willow" song, "Assisa al pré d'un salice," in which she accompanied herself upon the harp. She married Maretzek, and her career, both as a singer and a harpist of considerable talent, was crowned with good fortune.

Maretzek was harassed from all sides. He not only had difficulties with his singers and suffered from the exactions of the stockholders, but he had mutiny in his orchestra. He immediately discharged them in a body, and set out to find other players. The search continued all night, dance-halls, theatres, and even the ships in the harbour being ransacked for musicians. By five in the morning the necessary quota was secured. At seven rehearsals began. At ten breakfast was served in the greenroom. At eleven the second rehearsal was called, and at two dinner was served. At three the third rehearsal, and at six-fifteen the orchestra were allowed an hour's liberty. At eight commenced the first performance in America of Donizetti's "Maria di Rohan," in which Giulatta Perrini made her début before a New York audience.

Notwithstanding all his efforts, Maretzek's first season would have been a failure but for

the production of "Don Giovanni," which ran for fourteen consecutive nights.

Shortly after its close the Havana company again came to the United States, and this company of 1848 was the one which has been called the first really great one. It included Signore Steffanone, Bosio, and Tedesco, soprani; Signora Vietti, contralto; Salvi, Bettini, and Lorini, tenors; Badiali, Setti, Marini, and Coletti, basses. Arditi and Bottesini were again members of the orchestra.

Most of these singers were afterward engaged by Maretzek, or were associated with other opera companies, and from this point it is almost impossible to keep in touch with the various organisations, which were continually changing, according to individual interests and the exigencies of the seasons.

Signora Steffanone, who was frequently alluded to as "the great Steffanone," was a mezzo-soprano of full voice and great dramatic

power. She was generally conscientious in her work, but Maretzek, who had to suffer so much through the jealousies and intrigues of his singers, remarks humourously that she was subject to fits and convulsions, which generally occurred prior to her advertised appearance before the public. These fits were tolerably regular until Signora Bosio left the company, when they became more frequent and unexpected.

An account of Steffanone's appearance in "Favorita" says: "Though the first third of it is all spurts and attitudinising, it mellows as it goes on. I had never before seen the opera except with the pussy-cat interpretation of Bertucca. . . . The Havanese Cleopatra gave us the perfection of lyric tragedy in an overwhelming probability and truthfulness. She is a great woman, this Steffanone."

Signora Angiolina Bosio (or Mrs. Panayotis di Xindavelonis) was a singer of great promise who, having failed to make a success in

Paris, accepted an engagement with the Havana company, and became much admired in the Western Hemisphere. When she first appeared in America she was but twenty years of age, and possessed a pure soprano voice and admirable method. With an intelligent face, bright eyes, gay character, and winsome figure, she was not what one could call handsome; yet she was very attractive and made a great success as Elvira in "Puritani," and Violetta in "Traviata." It was her assumption of this latter rôle, in London, as a substitute for Grisi, after her return from America, which placed her in the front rank of opera singers, and her reputation steadily increased until her career was terminated by her early death in 1859.

Signor Salvi was a man of warm sympathies and generous disposition, and it was his custom to exercise his generosity to his friends and flatterers at the expense of the management. Any refusal to comply with his

demands was met by an indisposition lasting thirteen days, a limit determined by his contract, which stipulated that fourteen days of grace should be allowed him without loss of salary in case of illness. He was sufficiently popular to cause trouble by non-appearance.

Signor Bettini was a young man with a robust voice and manly figure. He was a native of Rome and made his début at Madrid in 1853, when twenty-three years of age. His career was good, and he became known as a most useful, but not great, tenor. In 1863 he married Mlle. Trebelli, but the union was not happy and a separation ensued before long. Bettini's pet vice was gambling, and in this, with its attendant iniquities, he frequently indulged to such an extent as to make him unfit for his duty.

Signor Marini, the basso, was considered by many critics to have been second only to Lablache. His histrionic talents were remarkable, and he was a man of majestic

appearance. For many years he was a great success in every civilised country, but he was capricious and not too reliable. After a brilliant career he died in London in absolute squalor.

Notwithstanding the strength of his company, Maretzek became a victim to qualms of fear because Jenny Lind was to appear in America under the management of P. T. Barnum. Although she was not to sing in opera, it was feared, and not without reason, that she would be so immensely popular as to draw the public away from the opera. Therefore Maretzek imported another star, Teresa Parodi, who had just made a sensation in London, and who was expected to eclipse the memory of Madame Pasta, whose pupil she was. These expectations were not fulfilled, for Parodi was lacking in many of the qualities essential to greatness, and was likened, by one paper, to an "artistic screech-owl to whom the quackery and puffery of

Strakosch has attracted so much attention." This opinion was given forth in the interests of a rival singer, and cannot be considered as voicing the sentiments of the musical public as a whole, if at all.

Teresa Parodi was born at Genoa in 1827. Her first appearance was made at Bergamo, where she is said to have made a sensation, and after singing at various other Italian cities she was engaged in London, where Jenny Lind was at the height of her popularity. Signora Parodi sang Norma and Semiramide, and took the part of Romeo, in "Romeo and Juliet," during her first New York engagement, the part of Juliet being sung by Miss Virginia Whiting, an American lady who made her début on that occasion, and who afterward married Lorini and had a successful career of several years. Miss Whiting looked pretty and sang correctly.

"The more we hear Parodi," said a critic of the time, "we are certain that we shall

have no one to fill her place. She played Romeo admirably, and sang with that luscious satisfyingness to the ear which a ripe apricot gives to the throat in the summer noon." Parodi remained in America for many years, and was one of Mapleson's singers during his earlier tours.

During the summer of 1851 Maretzek made an experiment at the Castle Garden Theatre, where he gave opera at "popular prices." The seating capacity of the theatre was about five thousand, and the audiences averaged from one hundred to 150 at each performance. Even an operatic jubilee, lasting from 10 A. M. till 11 P. M., failed to stir up anything like interest or enthusiasm. But it is possible that even to-day, with a much larger population and a larger proportion of them musically appreciative, if not musically educated, it would be difficult to secure a fair-sized audience for operatic performances in midsummer, and in a stuffy, ill-ventilated

theatre. The loss on this summer season was $22,000.

In 1851 Marietta Alboni came to America with the Havana company, and made her first appearance on December 7th, in New York, in "La Cenerentola." Here was indeed a great singer, and it is doubtful whether a greater contralto has been heard in this country. Alboni was, however, distinctly a vocalist, and not by any means a great actress. Mr. Armstrong declares that "in voice and perfection of vocalisation she was probably never surpassed, if equalled." Arditi, in his memoirs, says that she came to America accompanied by her husband, Count Pepoli, and was about thirty years of age. She had a lovely voice, and great facility of production, with a perfectly marvellous compass. In some variations which Arditi wrote for her she trilled upon a high B flat, passing immediately to low G.

Madame Alboni was a charming and amia-

ble woman, a veritable embodiment of good nature and affability. She was very superstitious, and avoided the number thirteen under all circumstances. She also had an abhorrence of wigs, and it was to her energetic and summary treatment of Arditi on the occasion of his first appearance in a wig, that he ever afterward exhibited the highly polished surface which was for many years an object of adoration to all true lovers of the opera. On observing the objectionable covering, she rushed at Arditi, tore it from his head and flung it away. It was picked up, and kept simply as a memento of youthful indiscretion.

Alboni's greatest triumph in America was in the part of Norma, — a part which she was induced to take only after the most urgent persuasion. In recognition of his services in persuading Alboni, and thus saving the season from disaster, Arditi was presented with a very handsome baton of

Malacca cane, with a beautiful topaz at one end, and at the other a little golden Apollo playing a harp. The next night Arditi used the new baton, but his energetic beat caused the Apollo to fly off, and it struck the flute player on the head, nearly putting an end to his artistic career.

Madame Alboni was a great favourite, so much so that in all the newspaper comments of the time, written by extremely caustic and apparently not too well-informed critics, there appears little or nothing disparaging concerning her.

CHAPTER IV.

ITALIAN OPERA. — HACKETT AND ULLMAN.

While Maretzek was struggling valiantly with all kinds of difficulties, and losing fortunes annually, other managers sprang up in all directions anxious to take part in the general financial devastation. Of these William Niblo was one of the shrewdest, and he succeeded in putting an end to the Astor Place Opera House by hiring it after the opera season, and exhibiting Donetti's performing dogs upon the platform previously sacred to the muse. The directors of the opera-house sued Niblo for breach of contract, on the ground that he had agreed to give only respectable performances. But Niblo showed that some of his dogs had

appeared before numerous "royalties" in Europe, and that their behaviour was at least as respectable as that of most opera singers.

Niblo was the proprietor of the establishment which rejoiced in the exceedingly misleading name of Niblo's Garden. He engaged Madame Thillon and Mrs. Maeder for English opera, and afterward he had French opera, but in 1853 he brought out Madame Henrietta Sontag, and in doing so he stepped fairly into the ranks of impresarios.

The closing of the Astor Place Opera House was made the occasion of a very amusing article in *Putnam's Magazine*, concerning operatic management, and it gives a capital picture of the situation as viewed from the outside, after opera had for some years been regarded as a permanent feature of amusement in New York.

After referring to the many delightful evenings spent at the Astor Place House, and regretting the closing of that establish-

ment, it continues: "Notwithstanding all these terrible failures, operatic managers appear to be a thriving race.

"There's the miracle! The opera-manager in the dull season rushes off to Europe to engage a troupe. He has just been utterly ruined by his last speculation, yet we find him taking a first-class passage on board a Cunarder, and drinking his Burgundy and Geisenheimer every day at dinner. After he has been gone a couple of months, indefinite rumours reach us, through the press, of the great things that he has been doing, the wonderful artists he has engaged, the extraordinary stratagems he was obliged to resort to in order to circumvent rival impresarios, who wanted to obtain possession of the celebrated *prima donna assoluta*, Signora Chizzilini from the Teatro San Felice. It is also hinted that he has been obliged to pay the artists prodigious sums of money, as an earnest for the continuance

of their engagements, though where he got said money the public is not informed.

"Well, in a month or so, the broken-down and bankrupt manager returns per steamer, in the very best health and spirits, and accompanied by the different members of his new troupe. Ha! At last the campaign is about to be conducted with spirit. Every wall is covered with placards containing a glowing prospectus of the ensuing season. There are at least two dozen operas, never performed in this country, that are to be produced almost immediately, with new scenery, costumes, and decorations, at the cost of several millions of dollars.

"The public is on the tiptoe of expectation, and every one talks of the good time coming, and every one feels a sort of mental shower-bath when 'La Sonnambula' is announced for the first night. And 'La Sonnambula' it is through the whole season, with perhaps just a slight sprinkling of

'Lucia,' just to freshen the people up a little. But they go, notwithstanding, with a good-natured pertinacity worthy of all praise, and listen to the choruses they know by heart, and the solos they could sing in their sleep, with a sort of trusting confidence that the manager will perform his promises yet.

"The season draws to a close. Notwithstanding the fact of the house having been nearly full every night, it is whispered dolefully that the manager, poor fellow, is again ruined. One or two of the chief artists get suddenly indisposed on the evening of the performance, and the tickets are returned. It leaks out, however, that the real cause was a rebellion on the part of the tenor, who was owed three weeks' salary, and who peremptorily refused to sing until he was paid. Every one pities the poor bankrupt manager, and when it is announced on the bills that, as a close to the season and as a chance for

the impresario to redeem himself, the grand opera of 'The Titans' will be produced, 'with new and appropriate scenery, magnificent costumes, and gorgeous effects, at the expense of — heaven knows how many — thousands of dollars,' the public, one and all, determine to support the enterprising manager. . . . After a splendid run of twelve nights, the public is astounded to hear that the manager is again ruined and the opera is no more. The singers have not been paid their salaries, and there are newspaper feuds between the debtor and his creditors. The manager is *désolé*. He has lost everything and must begin life over again, and, as a preparation for so doing, starts for his elegant country house on the Hudson, where he enjoys every luxury that money can give him. After a pleasant rest he starts again for Europe, pays more prodigious sums of money, returns with another brilliant troupe of artists, 'manages again, and is again undone.' "

This article was undoubtedly aimed at Maretzek, the opera of "The Titans" referring to "Roberto," which was produced in order to crush the Artists' Union Italian Opera Company, formed of recalcitrant members of Maretzek's troupe, — Bosio, DeVries, Bettini, Lorini, Badiali, and Coletti. Both Maretzek and the A. U. I. O. Co. lost money and dispersed. In 1855 (the following year) a similar result was obtained by the amalgamation of two rival companies, — which caused a too heavy salary list.

The universal free fight which followed this coalition of the two companies under the auspices of the Academy of Music was sharply summed up in the *New York Times* thus:

"Mr. Jacobsohn has a difficulty with the management.

"Mr. Jacobsohn has a second difficulty with Mr. Ullman.

"Mr. Ullman has a difficulty with everybody, on general principles of policy.

"Signor Mirate has a difficulty with Signor Badiali.

"Signor Mirate has a second difficulty with the management.

"Signor Mirate has a third difficulty with Mr. Maretzek.

"Signor Arditi has also a difficulty with Mr. Maretzek.

"Signor Arditi's chorus has a difficulty with Mr. Maretzek's chorus.

"Signor Arditi's orchestra has a similar difficulty with Mr. Maretzek's orchestra.

"Mr. Maretzek has a difficulty with 'the gentlemen who manage the press,' and generally with every one who has the misfortune to be under the latter's influence and control.

"And last, and most serious of all, Madame Anna de La Grange has a difficulty in her throat which prevents her singing."

After all this fuss, Ole Bull, the celebrated violinist, was seized with a desire to try his

hand at the business of impresario, and took a lease of the Academy of Music in 1855. His reign was short. After giving "Rigoletto" four times in succession, and then "Favorita," he announced "Lucia," but in the morning of the day on which it was to be given, a notice was posted on the door of the building, stating that "In consequence of insuperable difficulties, the Academy of Music is closed."

When Ole Bull entered into the business of operatic manager, he had magnificent plans by which a great school of music was to be formed, and of this the opera was to be the nucleus. The same idea has been propagated several times in later days, with more or less success. There is a certain glamour about the idea of opera which appeals more readily to the prospective prima donna than the plain conservatory or music school, but as far as the musical history of the country has proceeded, the gap between the end of

the school and the beginning of the opera has hardly been bridged over satisfactorily.

About the middle of the century several new impresarios appeared upon the arena. Whether they entered upon this occupation as a matter of choice, expecting to make large fortunes, or whether they were driven to it by circumstances over which they had no control, is open to conjecture. At all times the career of an impresario has held forth glittering attractions, but in the long run opera has always meant ruin to those who have staked their fortunes upon it. There are so many factors which conspire against the impresario that it sometimes seems as if success were an impossibility under any circumstances.

In the first place, the human voice is not a machine, and is likely to be injured by very slight causes, so that the singers are frequently unable to keep their engagements, and the public are disappointed. The mana-

ger is therefore between two fires: on the one hand the singers, who will, under some real or imaginary grievance, give him trouble by refusing to sing, urging as an excuse that they have a cold or some other ailment; and on the other hand the public, who will not support the enterprise if the singers cannot be relied upon. The best antidote for this trouble is the abolition of the star system.

But this would entail the education of the public to a point at which interest is centred upon the work to be performed rather than upon the singers who perform it, and would mean a reversal of all operatic traditions.

Then again, the impresario is subject to the freaks of fashion, for opera is a luxury, especially in America. The weather, the state of business, and a variety of minor causes may upset the impresario's plans. Even before the collapse of Maretzek, others, as William Niblo for instance, were suffering from operatic aspirations. Niblo was in a

somewhat different position from Maretzek, for he had a free hand, being the proprietor of his house. Maretzek, on the contrary, was lessee of the house which he used, and his lease was burdened with almost impossible conditions, against which he frequently rebelled, and which were doubtless as much the cause of his ruin as any other difficulty with which he had to contend.

Ole Bull was not the only musical artist who tried opera, for Thalberg, the great pianist, once rival of Liszt, had a short career in the business, being associated with Ullman and Strakosch, and probably providing the money for them to lose.

Hackett, once an actor, imported Mario and Grisi; Signor Arditi had a dismal experience in conjunction with Madame Devries. Then there was the Le Grand Smith Opera Company, which included Marini and Madame Alboni, and there were so many managers, and so many singers who established their

own companies (generally with a manager), and there was so much shifting about from one company to another, that it is impossible to keep account of them all.

Max and Maurice Strakosch, Bernard Ullman, and Diego De Vivo appear to have been the men most closely connected with the larger operatic enterprises for several years.

When Madame Henrietta Sontag made her memorable tour in the United States, in 1853, she was under the management of Bernard Ullman, although her husband, Count Rossi, also figures prominently in the management of her affairs. In New York she sang at Niblo's Garden, with Carl Eckert as conductor, and in July she sang at Castle Garden under Maretzek, besides which she sang in other cities.

In her early days Madame Sontag had sung in opera with Malibran, with whom she was on terms of warm friendship. De Bériot, who married Malibran, had been one of Son-

tag's suitors, but she had bestowed her hand upon Count Rossi and had been raised to the nobility in order to make the marriage possible and to satisfy the scruples of his family. On her marriage she abandoned her operatic career, but in 1848, when Count Rossi lost his fortune, his wife returned to the scene of her former triumphs, with undiminished powers. Indeed, her art had developed during her retirement.

Madame Sontag is described by Arditi as *petite*, with hair of auburn tint, large lustrous eyes of melting softness. Her voice was a soprano of delicately pure *timbre*, particularly fine in the upper notes. She could reach E in alt, with perfect ease and power. When she came to America her voice and beauty were as fresh and delightful as at the time of her début in 1826, and her most complete success was achieved after her first appearance in the United States. Her many sweet qualities and admirable talent won for

HENRIETTA SONTAG.

her the special favour and admiration of all the eminent musicians of her time.

Mr. Armstrong relates that her execution was so perfect that she was fond of singing the most elaborate compositions for the violin. Count Rossi seems to have acted the part of the conventional prima donna's husband, and jeopardised his wife's success by disputes with the members of the press, but her attractions were sufficient to disarm all opposition.

After her tour in the United States, Madame Sontag went to Mexico, where her career was suddenly terminated by the cholera.

Signor Pozzolini, who was the tenor in Madame Sontag's company, and who also died of cholera in Mexico, was a young man with a rather remarkable career. Born at Florence in 1824, he was educated at the University of Pisa, but deserted letters for music. He made a successful beginning in opera, but when the troubles of 1848 broke

out he entered the Tuscan army as a volunteer. After the revolution he found his way to Copenhagen, and thence travelled all over Europe as a singer, until engaged by Sontag for her American tour. His first appearance in this country was but moderately successful, but he soon won popularity, and his early death was much regretted.

The great event of the year 1854 was the visit of Grisi and Mario, who were brought to this country by Mr. Hackett, of whom the following sketch appeared in the *Musical World:*

"Hackett is one of the few men in the dramatic profession who does not look the stage; a plain, sturdy, substantial gentleman, strongly featured, and dressed with simplicity. . . . Mr. Hackett has had an eventful life of it; first as a merchant; then as the husband of a distinguished actress; then by a sudden reverse of fortune, and as sudden a revelation of his own genius, a distinguished actor him-

self; now, a bridge of enterprise across the Atlantic, over which have walked the timorous Grisi and the half-indifferent Mario, neither of whom wanted to come, and neither of whom would have come but for the resolute enterprise of Mr. Hackett."

After Hackett had made all arrangements for the engagement of Grisi and Mario, and appeared, like Mephistopheles, to claim fulfilment of their agreement, Grisi wished to withdraw, on account of her fear of the ocean. "But shall I have to go over the water in such a little boat as I crossed the Channel in?" she asked.

"Oh, no," replied the deceptive impresario. "You will go over on a sort of island; and your room will be as large as this dressing-room. Besides, I will speak to the captain and he will try to spread a kind of oil all over the sea to keep the waves down."

For the first few days it seemed as if Hackett was really doing all that he prom-

ised, but then storms arose and Grisi suffered. She complained that the vessel rocked the wrong way, a feeling which all who have experienced the pitching of a westward bound steamer into the heavy sea will sympathise with. It is not at all like the cradle music, and does not suggest a lullaby.

During their visit the newly built Academy of Music in New York was completed, and Grisi and Mario opened it on October 2, 1854, with a performance of "Norma." Their first appearance was, however, made at Castle Garden in "Lucrezia Borgia," and their farewell performance in the same opera took place on February 20, 1855.

One of the funny incidents of their tour took place at Washington, when the roof of the theatre leaked so extensively that Grisi was obliged to appear as Norma wrapped up in a huge fur cloak, while Mario sang the part of Pollio under the shelter of a great coachman's umbrella.

Mr. Armstrong declares that a general disappointment was felt regarding Grisi's voice. "It wanted character, and yet *when she was thoroughly excited* she produced an immense effect upon the audience."

The opinions of critics are frequently interesting, therefore the following apropos of Grisi may be quoted:

"Of all the vocalists who have visited us, not one was more accomplished than Madame Laborde, except Madame Sontag. Jenny Lind and Madame Alboni were her superiors, as well as the superiors of her superior, not on account of any greater skill or completer education, but solely by reason of higher mental and physical gifts. Her voice was harsh and mean, and her notion of art was purely technical and material; their voices were at once grand and sweet, and they, especially the former, were gifted with genius and the perception of the highest ideal in music. . . . Her (Grisi's) success has been

that of a superb voice, sufficient vocal skill, a lovely and majestic person, an impassioned utterance, great power both as a tragedian and a comedian, and an exquisite taste in dress, all ministering to that undefinable quality of mind, that intuition, which makes the great artist. . . . Signor Mario is the antipode, or, perhaps, it would be more gracious to say, the complement of Madame Grisi. . . . Her style is large and simple; Signor Mario's is little and elaborate. He has a lovely voice, and is a most accomplished vocalist. He is literally *vox, et prætereanihil.*"

Mario disappointed the public many times (in Philadelphia twice out of three performances), in consequence of which the *Bulletin* printed the following poetical comment:

"MARIO AS 'IL'———.

"*Il biglietto d'amor.*

"O precious Mario! You're like Paddy's flea,—
Put the hand on him and — he is not there;

A 'little joker,' — making people swear
They'll see you, — and swear worse if they don't see!
We have a proverb (musty, it may be)
About a bird that *can* sing and *don't*: —
What shall we say of you, — save 'tis your 'wont'
To 'murder expectation' hideously?
Think of the hearts you've broke — the tempers flayed —
The patience ruffled — and the ruffles tumbled!
The hack-hire lost — the curses more than grumbled
On your dear, curly, self-willed little head!
You've played 'il' this — 'il' that — till quite a martyr;
But here, 'tis clear, you've just played 'Il Pirata.'"

It was in 1857 that Thalberg, the celebrated pianist, having made a good deal of money by his concerts, and desiring to find an outlet for it, went in for operatic management, in which he associated himself, with Ullman, who went to Europe for talent, and with Strakosch. Ullmans secured Madame Frezzolini, Roger, the French tenor, Labocetta, tenor, Gassier, baritone, Carl Formes,

basso, and an American prima donna, Miss May.

At the same time Maretzek was searching for new talent for a company for Philadelphia and Havana. His efforts to secure Tamberlik were unsuccessful, for Tamberlik was not then sufficiently "ripe" for America, and did not reach this country until some sixteen years later.

An account of a performance of "Roberto," as given in the *Musical World* of this year, indicates once more that the grandiloquent promises of the managers were not always carried out to the letter.

"The grave-yard scene," says the account, "lacked graves and tombstones. The ghosts, therefore, were denied the privilege of rising out of them, and had to walk out from behind the scenes. The change of ghosts into nymphs, which abroad is usually accomplished by machinery, the ghostly dress being whisked off like a flash of lightning, had here

to be accomplished by the poor ghosts themselves, — with their own hands. The times are hard, however, and it is not strange that even ghosts have to undress themselves."

Bernard Ullman was an impresario who, during the middle of the nineteenth century, seems to have been mixed up in a great many enterprises, but to have had small success. In 1857 he joined with Thalberg and became a lessee of the Academy of Music in New York. He had been manager for Henry Herz, the pianist, and had developed a remarkable talent for advertising, and for organising combinations and schemes without any special regard for the truth. In his operatic ventures it was his custom to invent the most startling and exaggerated puffs for his star, and to ignore the merits of the other singers.

Strakosch entered the Ullman and Thalberg combination, and Thalberg withdrew, after which Strakosch and Ullman held to-

gether for three years. Ullman was always planning ahead and neglecting the present, while Strakosch was matter of fact and businesslike.

Together Strakosch and Ullman brought out Karl Anschutz as conductor, who was considered the finest conductor of his day, in America. They also imported Piccolomini, the great soprano, and Carl Formes, concerning whom De Vivo humourously remarks, "If anything could be stronger than the voice of Formes, it was his good opinion of himself."

As a sample of Ullman's methods, it may be mentioned that Piccolomini was announced as a lineal descendant of Charlemagne, and great-granddaughter of Max Piccolomini, the hero of Schiller's tragedy of "Wallenstein."

Strakosch and Ullman were at their wits' end on account of the dull season, when Adelina Patti was put forward. When she

sang, the house was crowded, but on off nights the benches were bare.

After the disastrous failure of Strakosch and Ullman in Philadelphia, Ullman returned to New York and tried to run a short season of opera, but again met with failure. Maretzek picked up Ullman's singers, and Ullman went to Europe, after a benefit in 1861, and eventually became the manager of Carlotta Patti and others, was prosperous, and acquired wealth.

Mr. George Frederick Bristow, whose opera "Rip Van Winkle" was produced in New York in 1855, was a native of Brooklyn, born in 1825. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London under MacFarren. He was a violinist as well as composer, and was concertmeister under Sir Jules Benedict during the tour of Jenny Lind in this country. He held a similar position in Jullien's orchestra, and was director of the Mendelssohn Union for three

years. For a long time he was head of the music department of the New York public schools.

Mr. Bristow wrote several large compositions of merit, among which may be mentioned a symphony in F sharp minor, the "Arcadian Symphony," and three overtures. He wrote two oratorios, of which the second, "Daniel," was given by the Mendelssohn Union with Parepa-Rosa as chief soprano. His "Niagara" was given by the "Manuscript Society" of New York in 1898, and was received with enthusiasm.

If little attention has been given in these pages to opera in New Orleans, it is not because that city was behindhand. On the contrary there seems to have been a more genuine love for the opera there than elsewhere, but from New Orleans came no harrowing tales of managerial losses or of the fickleness of the public, or of the unreliability of singers.

Operas were frequently given in New Orleans, which were never heard in New York, Boston, or Philadelphia. Some of the best singers found their way to the North after having been brought over by the New Orleans managers, and there are many indications which suggest the thought that New Orleans possessed a population more ready to appreciate and support good operatic enterprise than any city of the North. Fridays and Saturdays were called subscription nights, and on those nights the wealth and beauty of the city thronged the opera-house, arrayed sumptuously. The tendency was more toward French than Italian or German opera and singers, but not exclusively so. The Paris Opera House was the recruiting ground for New Orleans, while New York managers searched Italy, or watched London, for a London success was likely to be a New York success.

Philadelphia gave substantial proof of its

confidence in operatic enterprise by building an Academy of Music, larger and more sumptuous than that of New York, in 1856.

Verdi does not appear to have been held in high esteem by some of the critics. His operas were now supplanting those of Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti, though "Lucia," "Sonnambula," "Il Barbiere," "Don Pasquale," and one or two others of those composers are still favourites. In May, 1855, "Il Trovatore" was given for the first time in America, and after a careful analysis of the work the critic concludes thus: "And so, from prelude to horrible catastrophe, the tragedy has gone on unfolding through four acts, to end as it began, with poison and the gallows and the stake. All for the glory of brass instruments and lungs, and because natural exhibitions of human life and passion could not be deemed *effective* enough for this modern and advanced stage art."

Wagner was, as yet, unknown, but Ger-

man opera made a start in New York in 1855, when twelve nights were devoted to it at Niblo's Garden. The chief singers were Madame Seidenburg, Mlle. Lehmann, with Mr. Ungher as conductor. This season is said to have been a financial failure, but another attempt was made the following year, with still not pleasing result; indeed, the singers were accused of "inexorable shrieking," and when the conductor took his benefit, the programme consisted chiefly of Italian opera selections.

CHAPTER V.

ITALIAN OPERA. — STRAKOSCH AND DE VIVO.

Maurice Strakosch, whose name as an impresario was as well known as the names of Maretzek, De Vivo, Mapleson, etc., was born in a small village in Moravia. He had four brothers, — Max, Ferdinand, Ignace, and Sigismund ; of whom Max became associated with him as a manager, and Ferdinand engaged in a similar occupation in Paris.

Maurice Strakosch began his career as a musical prodigy, and travelled all over Germany giving concerts as a child-pianist. As he grew to manhood his desire was to become an opera singer, and he secured an engagement as tenor at Agram, where he received the princely stipend of thirty francs

a month. On notice of a reduction of this salary, on account of "hard times," Strakosch left Agram and went to Italy, with the intention of taking lessons of Madame Pasta. After three years' study under her care, he gave up the idea of becoming an operatic tenor, and resumed his career as a concert pianist, but in 1848, when Europe was full of revolutions, he decided, as did many others of the same profession, to try his fortune in America.

Soon after arriving in New York he joined Maretzek's orchestra, and afterward formed a concert company, consisting of Mlle. Parodi, who had been a fellow student under Madame Pasta, and had been recently imported by Maretzek, and Mlle. Amalia Patti. At the end of a two years' tour of the chief cities, Strakosch married Amalia Patti, and thus became the brother-in-law of the young Adelina, and her vocal teacher.

In 1857–59 Maurice Strakosch was occu-

pied as an operatic impresario, employing Mesdames de La Grange, Vestvali, Frezzolini, Parodi, Colson, and, in short, most of the singers who were prominent and favourites at the time. He took Madame Frezzolini for an operatic tour to New Orleans and Havana, and after the collapse of the operatic season in 1860, when he was reduced to extremities, he had arranged a tour with Maretzek, for Adelina Patti, through Mexico, but the young lady, having been informed by some gossiping travellers that Mexico was full of brigands, absolutely refused to go. Hence the trip to Havana and England, which resulted in Adelina Patti's triumphant début in London.

After the departure of Maurice Strakosch to London, his brother Max, who had acted as business manager for him, became manager, and during many years was active in the operatic and concert field. In 1861, in partnership with Jacob Grau, he managed a

company including Miss Hinckley, Madame d'Angri, Signors Brignoli, Susini and Mancusi.

Miss Hinckley was an American girl, whose home was in Albany, and her career commenced brilliantly. She became a very popular singer, and married Susini, the bass, who also was very popular. Not very long afterward Madame Susini died, leaving her husband with an infant daughter, to whom he was devoted. This young lady, when she grew up, married a dentist, and shortly died, on which her husband in desperation committed suicide. Poor old Susini, crushed by the succession of troubles, went to London, where he lived in great poverty. His troubles were ended by his being knocked down and run over by a cab.

In 1865 Max Strakosch again had an opera company, the intervening years having been given to concert management, but in 1868 he made a combination with Maretzek

and brought out Miss Clara Louise Kellogg, who had been in Europe. Miss Kellogg was already well known in America, having been before the public since 1861.

In the following year Carlotta Patti was his leading attraction, but on account of lameness she appeared but little in opera. In 1870 he brought out Christine Nilsson, who sung only in concerts that season, and did not appear in opera until the following year, when she appeared in "Faust" as Marguerite, in which part she was great, also in "Lucia," "Traviata," "Don Giovanni," and she sang "Mignon" on the occasion of that opera's first performance in America. During this season Max Maretzek was musical director. In the spring of 1872 Nilsson made a sensation as Ophelia in "Hamlet," with the support of Annie Louise Cary, Brignoli, Capoul, Barre, and Jamet.

In 1873 Strakosch again gave Italian opera, with Nilsson, Miss Cary, Campanini,

Capoul, Maurel, Del Puente, and others, Muzio being conductor.

The company which Strakosch brought to America in that season was probably the finest ever presented to the American public up to that date. Christine Nilsson, Maresi, Ortura Torriani, Italo Campanini, Victor Capoul, Victor Maurel, Del Puente, Nanetti, and Scolara. These singers, who all had more than ordinarily successful careers, were at that time all under thirty years of age. It was during this season that Campanini made his mark, singing in "Traviata," "Trovatore," etc., besides which he gave a noteworthy performance of Lohengrin, and sang the part of Rhadames in "Aida," when it was given for the first time in this country. This production is particularly worthy of note, because "Aida" was produced in America (November 26, 1873) before it had been given either in Paris or London. The other members of the cast were: Aida, Tor-

riani; Amneris, Annie Louise Cary; Amonasro, Victor Maurel; Ramfis, Nannetti; and the king, Scolara. Muzio was the conductor, as he was also at the performance of "Lohengrin," which made Campanini's reputation. Muzio, having been a pupil of Verdi, his only pupil it is said, was considered incapable of conducting Wagner's music, but he scored a triumph.

When Campanini came with Mapleson's company, some years later, he created the part of Don Jose in "Carmen," in which so many renowned tenors have since been heard, and he became such a favourite that the houses were small on the nights when Campanini did not sing, while on the nights of his performances the houses were crowded.

It is related by Mr. L. M. Gottschalk that one night "William Tell" was given with Prevost, the French tenor, who was great in that part. But the house was empty. Prevost never made a great success in the North-

ITALO CAMPANINI.

ern States, though he became very popular in New Orleans, and drew large houses. However, on this occasion in New York, Campanini, who was very weak in "William Tell," was called upon to undertake that part, which he did, and immediately the public flocked to "William Tell."

It has always been the case in America that the name of the singer rather than the name of the opera will draw the audience. In every case where a competent company with no great star has been presented, opera has been a failure, but when a great star has been presented the public will rush and will pay big prices. This condition was so well known to impresarios that many devices were used to make a singer of not extraordinary capabilities appear as something wonderful. The desire to hear newly discovered talent of marvellous proportions, which exists in the half educated musical public, and finds its climax in the church

choir committee, has been fully catered to, and prima donnas have lost their jewels, exploited their wardrobes, been shipwrecked, bitten by mice, divorced, have had their routine of daily life published, — how far they walk, how much they eat, what time of day they get up, — their likes and dislikes, and their opinions on various subjects have been dished up in a variety of forms. At the present day the most fetching device is a decidedly feminine article on the prima donna "at home," concerning the favourite particulars of which it is needless to discourse.

In the midst of all this rubbish, the artistic merit of a singer seems to be a matter of secondary importance, and the opera in which the singer appears — the work which demands the genius of the composer — is regarded merely as a channel for the conveyance of the notes of the supreme warbler.

Mr. Ullman, who imported Madame Frezzolini, was by no means modest in his manner

of extolling her charms, and it appears to have been somewhat of a disappointment to him to discover that his prima donna was not anticipated with the unalloyed delight which he had intended. The Americans had grown skeptical, and it was discovered that Madame Frezzolini was not very well known in Europe, and that her real name was Poggi, which fact seems to have caused her to be regarded with suspicion. Chorley says of her: "She was an elegant, tall woman, born with a lovely voice, and bred into great vocal skill (of a certain order). She was a real singer, and her art stood her in good stead for some years after nature broke down. When she had left her scarce a note of her rich and real soprano voice to scream with, Madame Frezzolini was still charming."

It was at this period that she was brought to America. She was born in 1818, and had been on the stage for something like twenty years. She was a pupil of Garcia, Ronconi,

and Tacchinardi, and had married a tenor named Poggi. She became popular in America, and De Vivo speaks of her in rapturous language, saying, "She was a beautiful woman, and a charming actress. She made more money than any other prima donna of her time, but died poor in Paris."

Frezzolini sang like a syren on the stage, and acted the part of a syren also in private life. In her younger days she allowed her admirers to fight for the privilege of wasting their money on her, but in her latter days she ruined herself by continuing a life of extravagance, and in trying to attract admiration.

In 1874 Strakosch had Madame Albani for his chief attraction, and the following year Tietjens, Madame Carreño, and her husband, Tagliapetra, were also members of the company, Carreño making her American début as a singer. Mr. Tom Karl was also a member of the company, and remained

under the management of Strakosch for several years.

During her season in America Mlle. Tietjens sang in "Norma," "Lucrezia Borgia," and "Il Trovatore," also "Don Giovanni" and "La Favorita." During this season (1873–74) Pauline Lucca and Ilma di Murska joined the Strakosch company, after having been members of Maretzek's company.

During the next few years Strakosch continued to give Italian opera, but with smaller companies, and apparently less of that bold spirit of enterprise which had brought so many impresarios to ruin, and which was now expected of them. Mapleson changed all this in 1878.

Concerning Carl Formes, who came with a great reputation, and who sang in America for many years, there was a marked divergence of opinion, for *The Courier and Enquirer* said, "The precision and firmness of his execution, the unerring truth of his in-

tonation, . . . and, above all, the pure and flowing method of vocalisation which he constantly exhibits, place him in the first rank of eminent lyric artists," etc.

The *Musical World* declared that, "Aside from the general failure of tone, a marked defect is now apparent in his *faulty intonation*. . . . He lacks style and school, and seems to be deficient in ear. Still, as the *biggest* voice, probably, that we have yet heard in this country, his arrival here is an event."

Signor Gassier was considered to be the best baritone since Badiali, but Labocetta, the tenor, made but a moderate success.

Madame Gassier had a voice as clear and extensive as that of Frezzolini, but did not sing with the same grace or feeling. She resembled Frezzolini in disposition, but had also a quick temper. She died at a comparatively early age, as a result of her extravagant living.

Madame Anna Caradori, who was an importation of 1857, was a native of Pesth and made her first appearance at Vienna about 1840. She was not a relation of Madame Caradori-Allan, who was a star of greater magnitude and of earlier date. She is said to have possessed a large and powerful voice, an energetic delivery, and considerable execution, but there was little that was sympathetic or inspiring in her singing.

Madame de La Grange, who came in 1856 and passed several seasons in America, was one of the celebrated pupils of the elder Lamperti, and enjoyed for many years a well merited reputation on both sides of the Atlantic. Of her Mr. Armstrong appears to have entertained a higher opinion than that which he expressed concerning Grisi. "Madame de La Grange," he says, "as a thorough artist had few superiors. Her style, vocalisation, and phrasing were admirable. She was equally good in Rossini, Weber, Bellini, Mo-

zart, Donizetti, and Verdi. Her voice was not fresh or sympathetic, but her consummate knowledge and appreciation of music enabled her to triumph over difficulties and render the true expression of the author."

Madame de La Grange's vocalisation was compared with the feats of violinists and pianists, and she was declared to exceed and surpass, in florid execution, Cinti-Damoreau, Laborde, Louisa Pyne, and Sontag, and possibly even Jenny Lind.

Madame de La Grange was a native of Paris (1823), and became a pupil of Bordogni. She went to Italy, where she lived for five years, during which time she became intimate with Madame Pasta, and with Rossini, whose influence secured her a hearing at Bologna, Florence, and Padua. She then appeared with success in Paris, and in 1848 went to Germany, where she was engaged as first singer at the Italian Opera in Vienna.

She had a marvellous faculty for languages,

and while at Pesth she learned and sang in the Magyar tongue. She married Herr Von Stankovitch, a Montenegrin holding the rank of colonel in the Russian army.

Lowell Mason heard her, while in London, and declared her to be superior in certain respects to Madame Sontag, and in others to Jenny Lind, though he admits that while he was delighted with her singing, he was not more so than with that of the two other ladies.

During her first engagement in America, Madame de La Grange assisted at the production of Arditi's "American" opera, "La Spia," a work of some merit founded upon Fenimore Cooper's novel, "The Spy." The other chief parts were taken by Brignoli, the tenor, and Miss Hensler, a Boston girl who is described as having a sweet, frank, ingenuous, expressive face, a voice pure but not massive, and commanding high notes readily.

Eliza Hensler was the daughter of a tailor who had a shop in a basement on West Street,

Boston. She went to New York and answered Mr. Paine's advertisement for singers at the Academy, and so well did she please him that she was given leading parts to study. After a season in New York, Mr. Paine sent her to Paris with a recommendation to one Carini, a theatrical agent, who secured an engagement for her in the opera at Lisbon. Here Dom Fernando, the consort of the queen, took her under his protection, and after the death of the queen, created her Countess of Edla. After the lapse of time sufficient to show respect to his deceased wife's memory, Dom Fernando married the countess, who thus became a relation of Queen Victoria. An indirect consequence of this marriage was the Franco-German war, through a course of incidents which it would take too long to trace here.

Miss Adelaide Phillips, the contralto, who was a popular singer in America until about 1879, made her début also in 1855.

Madame Gazzaniga was one of the singers in Strakosch's company of 1857, and remained in America for many years, being connected with several different companies at various times. She was not considered a particularly good singer, so far as vocalisation and tone production are concerned, but she had remarkable powers as a musical declaimer, and as an actress. To enhance her talents she was favoured with beauty so great that she captivated her audiences even before she sang a note. She was a "fresh, blonde, lady-like prima donna," whose charm was unique. According to De Vivo, she was the greatest Saffo on the operatic stage, and was at the time of her first appearance in America at the very zenith of her career.

At one time Frezzolini and Gazzaniga sang on alternate nights in New York, when the youth of Gotham adored Frezzolini, while the older people showed their admiration for Gazzaniga.

Madame Gazzaniga married the Marquis of Malaspina.

A singer who was well known in this country for many years, and who was very popular, was Madame Vestvali, a mezzo-contralto. She was a Pole, and rejoiced in the name of Vestvalovitch when off the stage. She was originally an actress, but discovering that she had a voice, she became an opera singer, in which vocation her singing was aided by dramatic talent, good looks, and taste in dress.

Madame Vestvali, after the New York season, organised an opera troupe, in which she was supported by Signor Ceresa, a tenor with a robust voice and a self-sacrificing devotion to his duty. The soprano was Signora Manzini, with a pure well-trained voice and fair dramatic talent. Signori Gasparoni and Baratini were the bass and baritone. She also took a company through Mexico, which country was regarded as an Eldorado for opera singers.

Signor Brignoli, who became so well known throughout the United States, came over in 1855, and was described as a "youth of rather an elegant and distinguished presence, although his stage gait is awkward; his voice is sweet, flexible, sympathetic, and of good volume. He sings with taste and feeling, and is given to a simple, faithful, unembellished rendering of the music of his author."

Brignoli became a great favourite, but in later years his selections became hackneyed, and he was made the object of many unfeeling criticisms. Numerous funny anecdotes are told about him, for he was full of odd kinks and was of a mercurial but lovable disposition. He made much money and spent it freely, and was very susceptible to flattery.

Brignoli married Kate Duckworth, an English contralto, generally known as Mlle. Morensi. She died, and some years later (1870) he married Isabella McCullough, an

American singer, who also died shortly afterward.

Signor De Vivo told many interesting anecdotes about Brignoli, who, he avers, was discovered by Alboni at a social gathering in Paris, and was then and there advised to study at the Conservatoire and become one of the greatest tenors. He was then a pale, sickly looking youth, tall and slim, with large expressive eyes, and a beautiful head of black hair, and all his friends thought that he was in danger of consumption.

When Brignoli made his début, it took place at the Grand Opera in Paris, in "Lucia," with Bosio as prima donna. The emperor and empress and Maurice Strakosch were present, and on the following day the latter engaged Brignoli for a season at the Academy of Music in New York. Signor Amodio, the baritone, fell into the net of Strakosch at the same time.

These two artists arrived in New York the

day after the failure of Ole Bull, and Messrs. Phalen, Coit, and Wikoff took over their contracts, together with the scenery and effects of Ole Bull. From that time Brignoli was actively engaged in opera, concert, and church singing for a great many years, and was always considered a most useful tenor.

Brignoli supported Adelina Patti in her memorable début in "Lucia." He took part in the performance of "Traviata" given at Philadelphia in honour of the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1860. This performance closed the season, and notwithstanding the enormous receipts, Strakosch and Ullman, the managers, were left by it in such a condition of poverty that they were unable to pay their singers or even settle their own hotel bills, for the authorities of the New York Academy had seized the box-office receipts.

After this catastrophe Strakosch took the young Adelina Patti on a concert tour through the South, thence to Havana, and

thus to London, where her brilliant talents soon brought fortune once more. Ullman returned to New York, and Maretzek went to Mexico, while from the wreck of the company Jacob Grau formed a new one, of which Brignoli was the tenor, other members being Madame Colson and Miss Hinckley, sopranos, Clara Louise Kellogg and Adelaide Phillips, contraltos, Susini, bass, and Sbriglia, the now celebrated Parisian teacher of singing, was also tenor.

Brignoli was engaged in 1865-66 to support Patti in her European tour, but he returned to America in the following season. In 1869 he became his own impresario.

In 1876 he sang at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia during the Centennial Exhibition. He was in the Emma Abbott troupe, and was afterward the tenor of a "Don Pasquale" company of which Signora Galimberti was the prima donna, and Signori Susini and Tagliapetra the other singers, while

Teresa Carreño, then Mrs. Tagliapetra, was the pianist. After a tour in the south this company was broken up, but re-formed with Madame Ilma di Murska, Mr. Makim, Brignoli, and Susini. In this form it visited the principal towns in Texas and meandered thence to Montreal, stopping at many places on the way.

In 1878–79 Brignoli was the tenor of a concert company of which Madame Marie Roze was the particular star. Some time later he became a member of the Brignoli-Godini Grand Concert and Opera Company, and again made a long tour, travelling through the Atlantic States to New Orleans, thence through Texas to Mexico, and finally to St. Paul and Minneapolis. He was offered and accepted an engagement with the Emma Abbott Company for the season of 1884–85, but was seized with illness in October, and died. At his death he was penniless, notwithstanding the fact that during the thirty

years of his career he had earned a great deal of money. He was a good musician and composed many songs and some instrumental music.

Madame Vietti, a singer of the same period, is spoken of as "a glorious contralto, whose full, deep, low tones have only been surpassed by those of Alboni."

Madame Nantier-Didiée, whose operatic career began in Europe in 1851, crossed the deep four years later to try her fortune in America, where she was not particularly successful. Her voice was a mezzo-soprano, and though the combination of personal beauty, attractive manners, and a well-cultivated voice of limited power enabled her to attain a good measure of popularity abroad, all indications point to the fact that in those days the voice was more highly esteemed than the art in this country. She never attained the highest rank as a soprano, and in later years endeavoured to win greater hon-

ours as a contralto, in which effort she was not successful.

She was associated with Madame de La Grange, Miss Hensler, Brignoli, Morelli, and Gasparone, altogether a strong combination, of which Madame Nantier-Didiée was the contralto.

Signor Amodio was a popular baritone for some years. He was a big fat man with a fluent and voluminous voice, and he eventually died of yellow fever in South America.

Diego de Vivo, whose career as an impresario in this country may be roughly stated to have covered a third of a century, was born at Sarno, Italy, in 1822 (January 8th). He was educated for the priesthood, but becoming infatuated with a young woman at an early period in his career, he forsook his studies and went to the Grand Museum of Arts in Naples to study architecture. Still pursued by Cupid, he ran away, enlisted in

the army, and did valiant service against the rebels, winning his straps by his bravery. He now became instructor of gymnastics in the army. While De Vivo was occupying himself in the service of his country, his lady-love married some one else.

De Vivo then forsook the army and became an instructor of gymnastics on his own account, but in 1849 he took the agency for a publication entitled "History of Italian Martyrs Since 1799," and by it accumulated a sum amounting to $10,000, with which he proceeded to enjoy himself, spending most of his time at the Grand Opera in Turin.

In 1854 he became objectionable to the government on account of his republican sympathies, was arrested, and shipped off to America with several hundred others whose further presence in Italy was considered undesirable. During the voyage, which lasted eighty-four days, he acquired a little knowledge of the English language, and on his

arrival in New York he began to give lessons in Italian. While thus occupied he became acquainted with Brignoli, who had recently arrived, and became his private secretary. This put him directly in touch with the opera once more. Shortly afterward he met Signor Albites, the husband of Madame Gazzaniga, and this acquaintance launched him upon his career as impresario. On the failure of the Strakosch and Ullman Company in 1860, De Vivo took Madame Gazzaniga on a concert tour, and then became manager of the Cortesi Opera Company, one of the numerous small companies which emanated from the greater enterprises of New York, and gave concerts and operatic performances in various parts of the country. The following season he was associated with Jacob Grau, and in this company Clara Louise Kellogg made her first appearance. In 1868 he managed the Parepa-Rosa company in a tour which extended to San Francisco, a large

portion of the journey being accomplished in stage-coaches. In 1872 he was manager of the Kellogg and States Opera Company, where he first engaged Castlemary, who was one of the most popular singers for many years. Other operatic enterprises with which he was connected were the Wachtel German Opera Company, the Aimée Opera-bouffe Company, Ilma Di Murska, Carlotta Patti, the Montague English Opera Company, and the Pappenheim German Opera Company, besides which there were numerous concert and dramatic companies. His last tour was in 1889 with Madame Albani.

While De Vivo was in Philadelphia, as secretary to Brignoli, in 1857, he met Miss Aurora White, the daughter of a merchant, and fell in love with her. The couple eloped and were married, and had a family consisting of a son and a daughter.

De Vivo died in New York, in 1898, as poor as the proverbial impresario, and was

buried by the Actors' Fund. He was a familiar figure at the Metropolitan Opera House for many years, and was known as an active, honest, and earnest man, who invariably did his very best for his artists.

The events which led to the wedding of Parepa to Carl Rosa are told by De Vivo: When Parepa was touring the country in 1867, she was quite infatuated with Brignoli, who was the tenor of the company, and was engaged to be married to him, at the end of the tour. She was, however, exceedingly jealous of the attentions bestowed upon Brignoli by other ladies, which, by the way, Brignoli was not at all loath to receive, and the affairs of love did not run smooth. Parepa settled the question one day, during a journey, by offering herself to Carl Rosa, the violinist of the company, who was a little man, and her junior by several years. She had previously regarded Rosa with more or less contempt, but now she evidently con-

sidered him as a more promising husband than Brignoli. The wedding took place to the satisfaction of all concerned, Brignoli included. The tour was ended, however, with a railroad accident, which left Carl Rosa with a damaged nose and Brignoli with a broken collar-bone. After this, the Carl Rosa English Opera Company was formed, and it had a successful career for some years.

Castelmary was for years a very popular singer — a baritone. He was born at Toulouse in 1834, and educated in Paris. His real name was Count Armand de Castan, but for professional purposes he took the name of Castelmary. He made his reputation by his assumption of the part of Mephistofeles in Gounod's "Faust," — replacing Faure, who was absent. This was Faure's greatest part, and in the '60's Castelmary was conceded to be the greatest in that part with the exception of Faure. While at the height of his career Castelmary married

Marie Sass, the famous soprano, but separated from her ten years later.

In 1870 he was the first basso of the French Opera Company at New Orleans, where he made an immense success. After this he joined the company of which Clara Louise Kellogg was the star, and De Vivo the impresario. Returning to Milan, he studied Italian opera, as it gave him a wider field than French opera. In 1879 he became a member of Strakosch's Company, appearing at Booth's Theatre in New York, after which a tour was made through the country, Teresina Singer being the prima donna. A few years later, he formed a company of his own for the performance of Italian and French opera, and set forth upon a tour through South America. This enterprise proved disastrous, and he returned to France penniless, having, it is said, lost some $40,000. After that his health began to fail and his voice to deteriorate, but he

was nevertheless engaged by Abbey and Grau in 1890, and was before the public up to the moment of his death, which took place in a most tragic manner at the Metropolitan Opera House, at the close of a performance in 1897. Castelmary was as popular off the stage as before the footlights, and nothing but good was said of him.

For half a century or more, from the time when operatic managers became numerous, the life has been increasingly strenuous, and there have been many instances of keen rivalry. De Vivo tells of an incident which occurred when he ran across Strakosch at Cincinnati. Strakosch had a company including Nilsson and Miss Cary. De Vivo's company consisted of Parepa-Rosa, Miss Phillips, Wachtel, and Santley. De Vivo gave up the opera-house at Cincinnati to Strakosch, and took his company to Pittsburg to avoid competition, but on arriving later at Cincinnati it was inadvertently mentioned by

a member of Strakosch's company that they were to return on the following Wednesday, thus bringing about the conflict which De Vivo wished to avoid, and of course drawing off part of De Vivo's audience. In order to repay Strakosch in his own coin, De Vivo telegraphed to New York, and started a subscription for a season of opera to take place at a time when Strakosch was intending to give a series of performances, and in this way he took the wind out of his rival's sails, and recouped himself for his Cincinnati losses.

When Wachtel, the great German tenor, came to America in 1871, he was under the management of De Vivo, who soon found that he had taken no easy task upon his hands. Wachtel drew large houses, and was making a good deal of money, when he suddenly bethought him that it was too much work to sing in opera, and that people would flock with equal eagerness to hear him in

concert, which would be much easier for him. He therefore ordered De Vivo to arrange a concert tour, and this resulted in his earnings dwindling to about one-tenth of what they had been. Opera was therefore resumed, but Wachtel would not sing if he heard anything which in any way disturbed his equanimity. De Vivo resigned and Wachtel relented, but having again become peevish, De Vivo brought suit against him for $50,000 damages, and this brought him back to a proper regard for the terms of his contract.

Madame Ilma di Murska has been so fully discussed in a previous volume that it is unnecessary to recapitulate. Nevertheless, she was so well known for many years that De Vivo's summing up of her character cannot fail to be interesting. Probably no man was better acquainted with her, for he was her manager for several years, and travelled all over this continent with her, and in Australia and New Zealand.

"Di Murska," he says, "was one of the most intelligent prima donnas that I ever knew, speaking and writing fluently German, Hungarian, Italian, French, English, and a little Spanish. She was a good musician, but was childlike and weak-minded, capricious, changeable, easily influenced, and eccentric to the last degree. She was a spoiled child and liked to be petted, and no living man could dictate to her. . . . The misfortune of the poor creature was that she had not a beautiful face. Her figure was beautiful and symmetrical. She had an alabaster complexion, real blonde hair, pretty feet, but ugly bony hands. She never bought a newspaper to read her triumphs, but when, in January, 1875, the *Toronto Mail* called her beautiful, she ordered her servant to buy fifty copies. She preferred beauty to the gods' gift of a golden larynx."

De Vivo's opinions on Adelina Patti, and the reason why her voice remained in

perfection for so many years, are worthy of note:

"First, her perfect method of the old Italian school, inherited from her mother, who was a famous singer, and her father, who was a fine tenor, also her half-brother Antonio Barili, a good musician and singing teacher.

"Second, her systematic, almost mechanical life in eating, drinking, and exercise, — a life of privation and toil.

"Third, her right of choice, according to her contract, of the operas and songs; each fitted the register of her voice.

"Fourth, she seldom attended rehearsals, and so did not fatigue her voice.

"Fifth, she never sang when slightly indisposed, no matter what the price offered, and she never forced her voice for effect, as generally all the singers do.

"Sixth, the last reason why Patti's voice lasted so long is a mathematical reason.

She never sang more than ten times a month."

By an elaborate calculation De Vivo showed that in thirty-seven years (up to 1896) Patti would have sung about 2,590 times, or only 210 times more than most prima donnas did in twenty years.

CHAPTER VI.

ITALIAN OPERA. — MAPLESON.

Colonel Mapleson, who exploited opera in America between 1878 and 1885, as a supplement to his ventures in Great Britain, was one of the most indefatigable and invincible impresarios who ever managed a company. Before entering upon the business of impresario he had already experienced much as a student of music, critic, violinist, vocalist, composer, concert director, and musical agent.

Mapleson was educated at the Royal Academy of Music in London, and on leaving that institution became one of the first violins at Her Majesty's Theatre, where, dur-

ing the season of 1848, he played from the same desk as Remenyi, the famous Hungarian violinist. Being seized with the desire to acquire fame on the other side of the footlights, he determined to go to Italy and study voice, but before doing so he managed a concert company, in 1849, of which Madame Sontag, Lablache the basso, and Thalberg the pianist were members, and the following year he embarked on a similar enterprise with Madame Viardot and Roger, the French tenor. This, with a little work as critic in the interests of a journal now defunct, filled up the time until he was able to start for Milan. In due time he made his appearance in opera, and then returned to London, where he soon became afflicted with a disease of the throat, necessitating a severe operation, which ruined his voice. Thus he was doomed to the career of an impresario.

He opened a musical agency in the Haymarket, the first established in London, and

did a very good business, until in 1858 Mr. Smith, the lessee of Drury Lane Theatre, induced him to take the management of the Italian opera. In this way did he launch upon a long and checkered career.

It was not until 1878, however, that Mapleson decided upon an American venture, and having taken a trip across in the spring to inquire into the prospects, he actually started at the end of August with a company consisting of 140 persons, including Gerster, Minnie Hauk, Trebelli, Valleria, Campanini, Frapolli, Galassi, Del Puente, and Foli, with Arditi as conductor.

During this tour, which lasted from October 16th to April 5th, he gave 164 performances of opera and forty-seven concerts, and visited New York, Chicago, Boston, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington. In 1879 Mapleson returned, bringing Mlle. Marimon as a leading attraction. But Marimon, although she appeared at first with

ETELKA GERSTER.

great success, soon lost her voice, and was obliged to give up. During this season Mapleson had Campanini and Aramburo for his chief tenors, and between them there existed great rivalry. Aramburo had a magnificent voice, and had become very popular, but taking offence at some newspaper comments, he immediately started for Europe on the next steamer without even notifying his impresario.

That Mapleson's efforts were not as pleasing to all as to himself, may be gathered from the following review of his season:

"Let us now glance at the repertory offered this season by Mr. Mapleson. It was utterly devoid of novelty, and was most commonplace in character. From the 10th of October to the 26th of December, Mr. Mapleson offered nothing that was not familiar; and a season of two months brought only the following operas: 'Traviata,' 'Faust,' 'Rigoletto,' 'Carmen,' 'Linda di Chamouni,' 'Il Tro-

vatore,' 'Lucia di Lammermoor,' 'Martha,' 'Aïda,' 'Mignon,' 'Sonnambula,' 'Dinorah,' 'Figlia del Reggimento,' and 'Il Flauto Magico.' The last four operas did not appear upon the repertory until Mlle. Marimon's arrival, so that, until the 3d of December, subscribers heard only ten operas, with all of which they had been familiar for years, and many of which had been more satisfactorily presented. 'Carmen,' for instance, was a failure with Mlle. Dolora, and all the performances in which Mlle. Adini and Signor Aramburo took part deserved little praise."

Mapleson's third tour was more extensive than the two previous ones, and he visited more cities. With Gerster, Valleria, Annie Louise Cary, Ravelli, Campanini, etc., he met with great success. A notable feature of this tour was the production, for the first time in America, of Boito's "Mefistofele" with Campanini, Valleria, Cary, and Novara.

This tour was also memorable for the first Cincinnati Operatic Festival, for which purpose a chorus of some four hundred voices, with an orchestra of 150 musicians, was organised by the Cincinnati College of Music. Of this festival Mapleson gives a highly coloured picture in his "Memoirs." Passing over the description of the crowds, the toilettes, the carriages, the accidents, and the enthusiasm, we may quote from him the account of the performances given.

"Our grand performance of 'Lohengrin' was followed by Mozart's 'Magic Flute,' Madame Gerster singing the rôle of the 'Queen of Night.'

"The third opera was Boito's 'Mefistofele,' for which eight thousand reserved seats were sold. The fourth night we had 'Lucia di Lammermoor,' followed by an act from 'Moses in Egypt;' the extreme back of the stage representing a burning sun, and the whole four hundred choristers joining to-

gether with the principals in the grand prayer, 'Dal tuo stellato sohlio,' which terminates the opera. On the fifth night Verdi's 'Aïda,' was given with entirely new scenery, painted for the occasion, together with new dresses and properties.

"A morning performance, 'La Sonnambula,' was given next day with Gerster. The audience, like all the previous ones, was immense. Every seat was occupied, while two thousand people, who had paid two dollars apiece, were standing up. The toilettes of the ladies were simply magnificent, baffling all description. The audience went wild over Gerster, encores were demanded and redemanded, people hurrahed and waved their handkerchiefs, whilst the most expensive bouquets and flowers were pelted on the prima donna, who at last was embowered in roses.

"On the last evening Gounod's 'Faust' was performed. The end was glorious as the beginning. By seven the big hall was

again filled, and at half-past seven, when Arditi took up his baton, the house was packed and jammed from the topmost part of the gallery."

A second Operatic Festival was held at Cincinnati in the following year (1882), at which Adelina Patti was announced to appear, but owing to a cold she was unable to fulfil her promise. Another mishap was the injury sustained by Mlle. Rossini, the prima donna in the "Huguenots," whose face was scorched by the powder from the guns of the Catholic Guards. The festival continued, however, and Minnie Hauk, Dotti, Campanini, and Del Puente were quite able to carry it to a successful issue.

The third Cincinnati Festival is said to have eclipsed the two preceding ones. The first performance was "La Traviata," and the second "L'Africaine." On the Wednesday afternoon Albani appeared as Amina in "La Sonnambula," and in the

evening "William Tell" was given with Mierzwinski, Galassi, and Dotti. On the Thursday evening Rossini's "Semiramide," in which Patti and Scalchi were the attractions, and on Friday Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" was produced with Ravelli, Galassi, and Albani. Saturday matinee, "Don Giovanni," with Patti, Dotti, and Fursch-Madi; and Saturday evening "Lohengrin," with Mierzwinski, Galassi, Monti, Scalchi, and Albani.

Henry Abbey secured the contract for the fourth festival. At the time Mapleson's season should have taken place Cincinnati was suffering from a flood. The city was in total darkness and no trains could reach their destination. Under the circumstances Mapleson and his artists gave a performance at Chicago for the benefit of the sufferers, and sent about $6,000 to the Mayor of Cincinnati. He then made a diversion toward Minneapolis, where he gave three performances.

MADAME ALBANI.

Let us return to the tour of 1880. Mapleson mentions, as an incident connected with Madame Gerster's immense success, the fact that after a matinée performance, which was given in Boston during a snow-storm, no less than one hundred ladies' odd rubber overshoes were picked up on the family circle stairway. They had been lost in the rush. This incident verifies all that has been written or said concerning the grim determination of the Boston *matinée girl.*

Another interesting feature of this tour was that the competition between Mapleson and Abbey was inaugurated, and eventually it was carried to a point which meant ruin for both. Madame Patti was in New York on a speculation of her own, after an absence of twenty-two years. She was giving concerts, but the prices asked by her manager for tickets were so high that the public refused to be tempted, and Patti decided to try some other manager. Mapleson sent her a bou-

quet, which cost him $150, with some well-chosen words of admiration. This he followed up by a visit, and Madame Patti had already expressed the delight which she felt at the possibility of singing under his management, when Mr. Abbey stepped in and offered terms for a concert tour which she found it advisable to accept. Mapleson had to content himself with her promise to sing at the Cincinnati Festival, a promise which she was unable to fulfil.

At the end of the season a fierce competition took place between Mapleson and Abbey for the services of Adelina Patti for the following year. Patti was in New York, as were also Mapleson and Abbey, and Patti was about to sail for Europe.

In view of the fact that this conflict gave an object-lesson to operatic stars, marked the inauguration of what has since been termed the "high salary crime," and led to the downfall of both managers, it may be permissible

to reproduce a summary of the conflict, which was taken from an American paper and published by Mr. Joseph Bennett, the celebrated English critic, in a journal of the day, with comments from his own pen. It is fair to remark, however, that Mr. Bennett, in writing this article, wished to illustrate the difference between English and American journalism, the former being considered dull and prosaic, dealing with principles, while American journalism dealt with persons and individualities.

"The twenty-third day of April last was 'the most eventful one known since Colonel Mapleson hoisted his standard above the walls of the Academy.' All through its weary hours sounds of battle were heard, and in the afternoon a reporter left the *Times* office for the gallant colonel's headquarters to see how the fight was getting on. . . . 'What are you all waiting for?' said the reporter to the assembled company, and was answered, 'To find out about that

Patti engagement.' Just then the chief entered, amid cries of 'How goes the day?' The colonel shook his head. Abbey had brought up fresh reserves. 'He has offered her another thousand dollars!' Mapleson was as anxious as Wellington before Blücher's guns opened. 'You can't fight Vanderbilt, you know,' he said, plaintively, 'that is, not if you are only an Italian opera manager.' On all other points the colonel showed that Abbey was completely 'out of the running.' Lucca, Sembrich, Tremelli, Valleria, Lablache, stood bound to the Academy, and Gerster would sing there if she came to America at all. Here the reporter put in a word on the other side: 'Mr. Abbey has a very strong tenor in Campanini.' The colonel admitted it, but doubted whether he would appear, and gave reasons, which are both physiologically and historically so curious — to say the least — that I reproduce them in full. 'A singer's

voice, let me tell you, is like a very fine musical instrument — that's just what it is, in fact. It has got to be kept in use all the time. Now, when Mario was singing for me in London, he was doing splendidly, but he came to me and said he needed a rest. I argued with him, and told him he did not, but he insisted, and I released him. He never sang another note. Annie Louise Cary went away from me to take a month's rest, and she never sang again. Now, Campanini has been taking a year's rest. Do you think he would do that and live by spending his own money, when there are any number of European managers ready to give him any price to sing for them? I don't believe he is coming to America at all.' With this exercise of a splendid imaginative faculty, the manager dismissed Abbey's last hope, and his own interlocutor at the same time.

"The reporter next presented himself at

the enemy's quarters, and found Mr. Abbey, whom he calls an 'incipient impresario,' standing near the box-office of Fifth Avenue Theatre. Here is a pen and ink sketch of Colonel Mapleson's doughty foe: 'A very shiny silk hat crowned his raven locks, and his luxuriant dark moustache stood out on each side of his mouth with an air of distinction. A standing collar of generous height encircled his neck, and a dark overcoat with expansive silk facings hung upon his broad shoulders. In the centre of his dazzling white percale shirt glittered a single stud, the central figure of which was a large emerald surrounded by half a dozen gleaming diamonds. From beneath his waistcoat dangled a large gold seal. His countenance was smiling, and his manner of speech gave evidence that he was not weighted down by the importance of his position.' With this impressive personage, the reporter did not get on so well as with the generous and

communicative colonel. Mr. Abbey dealt only in negatives; his 'manner of speech' reminded one of 'Non mi ricordo,' as used at the trial of Queen Catherine, and 'Non possumus,' as employed by the late Pope. Oh, no! Mr. Abbey had done nothing; he had not engaged Patti; he had not, in fact, engaged anybody, and it was of no consequence. 'I'm in no hurry,' said Mr. Abbey, and sauntered away, softly smiling. Thereupon the astute reporter hastened back to the Mapleson camp, and found consternation where he had left anxiety. 'Abbey's got Patti,' was the cry that rang around in melancholy accents. There could be no mistake, for had not Mapleson's business manager seen the contract? An hour or two later the colonel announced to his 'benefit' audience that the *diva* would sing for him. Imagine the perplexity of the poor reporter! What was he to believe and make the next morning's public believe with him? In this

state of mind he again encountered the colonel, now radiant, save when he thought of the price to be paid for his triumph, — $5,000 a night; or, on the whole season, $25,000 more than under the previous contract. 'This is Abbey's doing,' said the victorious manager, and straightway called his rival a 'guastamastière,' adding, impressively, 'Don't forget that word.' So ended the memorable 23d of April.

"On the morning of the 24th, a *Herald* reporter saw, in front of the Windsor Hotel, a wagon loaded with large trunks, some bearing Patti's name; some Nicolini's. A few minutes later he stood in the lady's 'parlours,' armed with a note-book and pencil. The fair tenant had astonishing witness to bear. 'Nothing is settled yet,' said Madame Patti. 'But,' interjected the startled journalist, 'you have decided to sign with Colonel Mapleson, have you not?' The *diva* at once used uncomplimentary language; 'I

am very displeased with that person, and I would give — oh, I would give anything if he had nothing to do with the business.' 'How has he displeased you?' 'Oh, in ever so many ways. . . . He has had many opportunities of saying things nice and pleasant about me, but he has generally done the reverse.' Madame Patti then favoured the reporter with a glimpse of the colonel in his *vie intime* as a manager: 'Colonel Mapleson comes here when he wants me to sing, and he calls me "my dear child," and he goes down on both knees and kisses my hands, and he has, you know, quite a supplicating face, and it is not easy to be firm with a man of such suavity of manners. But I can say that I would be heartily glad if Colonel Mapleson had nothing to do with this matter at the Academy.' Madame Patti then turned to Mr. Abbey: 'I would be ever so happy if I could sing for Mr. Abbey. He is such a delightful manager. I have always had the

pleasantest business arrangements with him.' After this, the reporter was no nearer the object of his quest, but eventually he came upon it, or, perhaps, fancied he saw it in the fact that Abbey offered the smaller salary but the larger guarantee, Mapleson the smaller guarantee but the larger salary. One or the other might advance, and in the interests of fair play all round there would be no signature till just before the ship sailed. At midnight, on board the *Arizona*, Madame Patti was still uncertain, so remaining till her agent, M. Franchi, arrived with news that he had pledged her to the Academy. The satisfied reporter then went away, taking with him the artist's last words, 'I am very sorry for Abbey, but, mind, this is done for Mr. Gye, not for Colonel Mapleson.'

"Meanwhile Mr. Abbey had been interviewed at his theatre, and found in a placid state of mind. He was not disappointed; he meant to sleep well that night, and to give

New York such an opera next season as it never before had. A little later the colonel also expressed an intention to sleep well, for, as he poetically put it, 'The strife is o'er, the battle's done.' Coming down to prose, the gallant victor added, 'I have called in my scouts, and grog has been served all round.'

"The battle, as it chanced, was not over. Early in the morning, Abbey got round the colonel's flanks, and attacked his rear with such vigour that when the *Herald* reporter came on the scene he found Mapleson in the midst of strife, but calm and self-possessed, like all great captains. He was busy signing the contracts of his chorus, some members of which the enemy had surprised and captured. 'Four,' said the colonel, 'that I had no further use for, and I believe Abbey picked them up at once, at advanced rates.' The foe had also carried off Corsini, Costa, and Caravatti, but this troubled their whilom

chief so little that he launched into a dissertation upon his chorus singers, 'on whom falls the weight of the season,' and of whom he expressed himself very proud. 'The public often wonder,' remarked Colonel Mapleson, 'how they take their parts so easily. There is nothing strange about it. They rehearse in real life at home all the characters that they assume on my stage. In a few weeks you will read of their doings in the newspapers.' The ingenuous reporter was struck by these words, and going down to Moretti's, came upon a group of the colonel's brigands. They were 'putting in next season's supply of macaroni,' but had breath to confirm their chief's words. 'Of course we can act,' said one. 'Next week we go home to rehearse for the fall. In a few weeks you will hear of an English nobleman, attacked and carried off to a cave in the Italian mountains. Little will it be imagined that the outlaws are only Maple-

son's chorus rehearsing for his new opera.' 'Do the ladies also rehearse with you in Italy?' meekly queried the reporter. 'Oh, yes,' answered the brigand, 'while we rob and kill, they make love and poison dukes. A beautiful tender girl who is with us has been singing in one part for thirty years. She has been asked to be a prima donna, but she is too good an artist to leave the chorus. She is great in poison scenes. . . . This is a great and noble life that we lead.' The reporter went away.

"There remains to record the colonel's observations upon Madame Patti's thrust at him. 'That was only a bit of acting on her part. Why, we are the best of friends. I am sure she thinks the world and all of me positively. Franchi told me to-day that Patti had only said this for effect, and that she would make it right when I went to London. Patti displeased with me! Why, how could she be? She has given me a pressing invitation to

spend a week at her Welsh castle, Craig-y-Nos. Egad! I think I'll accept it. She'll be so glad to see me.' With this 'flourish' the gallant chief retired from the field of victory, his blushing honours thick upon him."

When the season opened Mapleson found that Abbey had succeeded in luring away many of his best singers. Campanini, Del Puente, and Madame Lablache, besides the stage-manager and many of the chorus, deserted to the enemy, and Mapleson secured an injunction restraining them from giving their services in any other place than where he agreed, but afterward released them "for a consideration."

Abbey opened his season at the Metropolitan Opera House (which being new was in itself a great attraction) with Nilsson, Valleria, Lablache, Fursch-Madi, Scalchi, Trebelli, Campanini, Stagno, Novara, Capoul, Del Puente, Corsini, and Kaschmann, and last, if not least, Marcella Sembrich, who made her

American début on October 24th, in "Lucia di Lammermoor."

Mapleson had Adelina Patti, Gerster, Pappenheim, Dotti, Josephine Yorke, Galassi, Perugini, and others less known. He also added Nordica.

In order to counteract the effect of the new opera-house, Mapleson planned a great reception for Madame Patti on her arrival from Europe. Sixteen large tugboats covered with bunting were engaged to meet her steamer. These were to carry military bands and to approach the vessel in two columns, eight on each side, with whistles tooting and bands playing. Arditi had written a cantata for the occasion, and this was to be sung by the operatic chorus on Patti's arrival at the wharf. But the steamer passed Fire Island unobserved, and was not signalled, so the military bands passed the night in silent contemplation, and Patti made a very commonplace entry into New York.

The most thrilling moment of the season was when in Chicago the chief artists of the rival companies were living under the same roof, — Patti, Gerster, Nilsson, Fursch-Madi, Sembrich, Trebelli, and Scalchi not only being in the same hotel but having rooms on the same floor. Both companies gave brilliant performances, and both lost money.

By the time Mapleson reached St. Louis he came to the conclusion that it would be advisable to get out of the way of Abbey's competition, so he decided on the bold expedient of a trip to the Pacific coast.

The journey was a series of ovations. At Denver several performances were given; at Cheyenne the whole town, government, brass band, and all, turned out to meet the company. The opera "Sonnambula" was given, and the house was crowded, although the tickets were ten dollars each. Mapleson's impressions of Cheyenne are interesting. "Although Cheyenne is but a little town, consisting of about

two streets, it possesses a most refined society, composed, it is true, of cowboys; yet one might have imagined oneself at the London Opera when the curtain rose, — the ladies in brilliant toilettes and covered with diamonds; the gentlemen all in evening dress. The entire little town is lighted by electricity. The club-house is one of the pleasantest I have ever visited, and the people are most hospitable."

Salt Lake City was the next resting-place, and there "Lucia" was given. The arrival at San Francisco caused great excitement, and the tickets sold at enormous prices, the sales being attended with more or less strife and damage.

The California trip enabled Mapleson to partly recoup himself for the losses sustained during the earlier part of the season. When he returned to New York, Abbey had given up the fight, and retired from operatic management after having lost a very large

amount of money. Thus Mapleson was enabled to reëngage some of his former artists.

Nothing daunted by past experiences, Mapleson made preparations for another season, and this time he secured Patti, Minnie Hauk, Emma Nevada, Felia Litvinoff, Bauermeister, Alma Fohstrom, Scalchi, Dotti, Ravelli, Nicolini, Del Puente, etc. The most notable events of the New York season were (1) the début of Emma Nevada in "La Sonnambula," with brilliant success; (2) the twenty-fifth anniversary of Adelina Patti's first appearance at the New York Academy of Music, the opera "Lucia di Lammermoor" being the same in which she had made her first appearance; (3) the first performance in America of Massenet's "Manon Lescaut" on December 23d (1885), with Minnie Hauk, Del Puente, and Giannini.

On account of some difficulty with the directors of the Academy, Mapleson closed his

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EMMA NEVADA.

New York season early, and went to Boston, where Patti gave one of her innumerable "positive farewells," for which she became famous.

Leaving Boston, the company made its way west by Philadelphia, New Orleans, St. Louis, Topeka, St. Joseph, Omaha, Cheyenne, Salt Lake City, and so to San Francisco, where the triumphs of the previous season were repeated, and Madame Nevada, whose appearance was delayed by a month's illness, received an enthusiastic welcome on her first appearance in her native State as a prima donna.

On the return journey a stop was made at Burlington, Ia., where a performance of "Faust" was given at such short notice that the announcements were chalked up on the walls, there being no time for printing.

The next stop was made at Chicago, where a grand operatic festival was prepared in an opera-house built specially for the occasion.

The festival lasted two weeks, and the audiences were immense. A performance of "Aïda," with Patti, Scalchi, De Anna, and Nicolini, is said to have drawn a house of twelve thousand people. Concerning this occasion Mapleson writes: "About this time a complaint came to me from behind the scenes that Madame Patti and Madame Scalchi were unable to force their way from their dressing-rooms to the stage, the wings and flies being crowded with some two thousand persons, who, during the first act, had been joining in the applause of the singers with the audience in front. Together with these were some five hundred supernumeraries with blackened faces, in Oriental garb, chasing around to try to find their places, others, with banners, arranging their dresses. At length, with the aid of the police, Madame Patti was enabled to leave her dressing-room, but was surrounded immediately by crowds of ladies with pens, ink,

and paper, requesting autographs just as she was going to sing her *scena.*"

The march in the third act was performed by six hundred of the State militia, and the *finale* of the same act was made impressive by a military band and an extra chorus of 350 voices. The festival over, elaborate formalities of mutual admiration took place between the mayor, the Festival Association, and Colonel Mapleson, and the latter took home with him, as the result of this season's labours, some $150,000.

The season of 1885–86 was a sad one for Mapleson. In the first place he found himself opposed by the newly formed American Opera Company in New York, and all kinds of difficulties were constantly confronting him. His company was a strong one, and although Madame Patti was not in it, he had Madame Minnie Hauk and Marie Engle, in addition to many of his previous artists.

After leaving New York the company was

torn by internal dissensions and disasters of all kinds. Minnie Hauk and Ravelli had a disagreement, the result of which was that Mapleson was obliged to give a bond for $2,000 to guarantee his tenor's future good conduct. Arditi had an attack of pneumonia which put him out of action for several weeks. Mapleson had to succumb to illness in Minneapolis. In San Francisco Ravelli again gave trouble, and instituted legal proceedings against Mapleson. De Anna also refused to sing, and was replaced by Del Puente. In fact the whole company was, as Mapleson says, in open rebellion. Finally Ravelli seized all Mapleson's property, and the unfortunate company, unable to pay hotel bills, were obliged to camp out in the streets until such time as the legal matters were settled and money could be procured.

The retreat from San Francisco was effected with excellent strategy, a series of rear-guard actions being fought at various

points. That is to say, operatic performances were given in certain cities in order to pay expenses, the receipts being pledged in advance to the railroads for transportation. Thus the remains of a once brilliant company reached New York.

Mapleson attributes the collapse of the company to the reckless gaiety indulged in by the singers at Minneapolis, where the winter festival was in full swing, and the ice palace and tobogganing offered irresistible attractions to the singers. Wet skirts and bad colds followed.

But there were other potent reasons for the failure of operatic enterprise. There were riots in Cincinnati, in Chicago, and in Detroit. Mapleson's chorus and orchestra, inoculated with the germs of "strike," which at that time filled the air, refused to do their duty. To relate the difficulties encountered by Mapleson in withdrawing his forces across the continent and the Atlantic

would take too much space, but it can safely be said that few men have been so hampered with writs, attachments, and other legal processes, or have so successfully combated the difficulties placed in their path. When he finally left New York, he avoided an arrest which was prepared for him in Jersey City, by departing from Castle Garden in the health-officer's steamer, the captain of the Inman liner having agreed to heave to outside the harbour in order to allow him to get on board.

Thus ended Mapleson's operatic career in America, with the exception of a short and disastrous attempt a few years later, when he met with defeat in Boston, after having produced "Andrea Chenier" for the first time in this country.

Notwithstanding the final failure of Colonel Mapleson, America is much indebted to him, if only for the fact that his early success provoked competition, and helped to develop

a taste for opera, and a desire for still higher achievements in that line. During the Mapleson period German opera was struggling for recognition, and grand opera in English made a new effort. The Metropolitan Opera House was built in New York, and eventually, during the last decade of the century, Italian, French, and German opera were given under the same management, and grand opera was given, and is given, on a scale which made Mapleson's efforts seem small.

The list of celebrated singers who appeared under Mapleson's management is a long one. Adelina Patti, Etelka Gerster, Marie Marimon, Marie Roze, Minnie Hauk, and Sophia Scalchi are all names to be remembered in connection with Mapleson. Madame Parodi was still singing during Mapleson's earlier tours, and was, for a time, a member of his company. Madame Lablache, Madame Sinico, Madame Ambré, and

Mlle. Belocca were all singers of high class, and were in Mapleson's companies.

Mapleson was always inclined to engage American singers, but he knew the American public sufficiently well to understand that an American singer must make a reputation abroad, and must generally be introduced to her own countrymen under a foreign appellation. Alwina Valleria, who was a popular member of his company during several seasons, was a native of Baltimore. Minnie Hauk, who enjoyed a brilliant career, was a native of New York. Arditi records that on her début at Covent Garden, "her bright face and laughing eyes won the hearts of the people at once. Mapleson had in her a promising discovery. Her voice was a very high soprano, neither very powerful nor very rich, but clear and light with a mezza voce of peculiar charm, and no trace of vibrato."

Annie Louise Cary, one of the best contraltos of her day, was born in Maine, as

was also Lillian Norton, known to the world as Madame Nordica. Louise Dotti and Marie Engel, who appeared under Mapleson, were of American birth.

Campanini, Del Puente, Galassi, and Ravelli were all under Mapleson until Abbey arose in his financial might, backed by a wealthy syndicate. Ravelli was one of the most popular tenors, if not one of the greatest. He was a little man, with a beautiful voice and a fiery temperament, which gave a colour to his singing. He was a sore trial to Mapleson on account of his utter disregard to his duties, but when Mapleson fell into difficulties Ravelli was the first and most savage enemy of the man who had literally raised him from obscurity. Arditi says, in relating the San Francisco troubles of the Mapleson company on their third trip, that Ravelli acted like a fiend. Ravelli was a treat for his audiences, but a terror for his manager.

Madame Louise Dotti, who made her début under Mapleson at the Academy of Music, had a soprano voice of rich and sweet quality, and a pleasing personality. She was blessed with a marvellous memory and could take at a moment's notice, without rehearsal, the leading parts in several important operas. Madame Dotti won honours abroad, and was chosen as the prima donna at the fêtes given in Italy at the exhumation of the remains of Bellini.

Madame Ambré was not a drawing card in this country. Her appearance was prepossessing, and her voice a fine organ, but in spite of the fact that she appeared in "Traviata" covered with diamonds (gifts of the King of Holland), she failed to please American audiences.

Madame Lablache, on the other hand, was fairly successful, though she never created a furore. According to Arditi, she was a charming woman, always ready to sing, nor

did she ever feign indisposition or quarrel with her fellow artists. Her great weakness was her desire to spend money, and her generosity was proverbial. At times it led her into difficulties, and once she was sued for the cost of a cloak which she had ordered and could not pay for. She managed to fascinate the judge and gain her case.

Regarding Campanini, the following opinion appeared from the pen of Philip Hale on the death of the celebrated tenor: "No tenor who has blazed here above the opera horizon has fully equalled in brilliancy Campanini at his zenith. De Reszke, in point of personal refinement, is a greater artist, but his voice is inferior, and his dramatic action lacks the elementary force shown by Campanini when aroused. De Lucia is a greater actor of melodramatic parts, but his voice is too shrill. Tamagno in 'Otello' is beyond comparison, but that is his one opera. . . . Of all tenors who have visited us since

1873, the greatest, viewed from all points, is Campanini."

One of Mapleson's tenors, in 1882, was named Mierzwinski. He did not create any great furore, perhaps because Campanini was at the height of his popularity. His magnificent voice would certainly have placed him in the front rank of his profession, were not his method of producing it so defective. He began life as a civil engineer after completing his school and university studies; but his inborn passion for music prompted him to study the violin far more assiduously than the profession for which he had been specially educated, and he succeeded in achieving a high degree of proficiency upon the instrument of his choice. It was not until some considerable time after he had become an accomplished violinist that his musical friends made the discovery that nature had gifted him with a voice of extraordinary power and compass, and urged him to cultivate it. His

shortcomings in the matter of vocalisation were, of course, attributable to the circumstance that his training as a singer commenced at an age at which it ought to have been completed; but the sound musical knowledge he acquired whilst learning the violin, on the other hand, has proved an advantage possessed by few of his fellow tenors.

During Mapleson's period there was an ever-increasing demand for Wagner. Dissatisfaction was expressed with the "threadbare Italian operas," several of which, by the way, are as popular to-day as ever, and the cry went up for Wagner, — "Tannhäuser," "Tristan," and even for "Parsifal."

Henry E. Abbey was the man who put an end to Colonel Mapleson's career in America as an operatic impresario, but in doing so he lost an immense amount of money, chiefly that of other people.

Mr. Abbey was a native of Akron, O.,

where his father was a jeweller. As a young man, Abbey entered his father's business, but being much attached to the theatre, he spent a great deal of his time there and soon secured employment as a ticket seller. In 1869 he leased the theatre and produced a play, and the following year organised an opera company, of which Mrs. Thomas Whiffin and Signor Brocolini (John Clark) were members.

In 1871 the elder Abbey died, and the son sold the jewelry business and returned to his theatrical enterprises. For a time he was manager in Pittsburg. In 1873 he managed Lotta (Mrs. Crabtree), the actress, who afterward helped him liberally when he was in difficulties.

In 1876 he became a partner of John B. Schoeffel. After a season in Buffalo he went to New York and leased the Park Theatre, and from time to time others in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston.

Mr. Abbey's connection with grand opera began in 1883, when the Metropolitan Opera House opened. He determined to crush Mapleson, and his method of doing so was to pay Mapleson's singers larger salaries. But Abbey was not content with taking away Mapleson's stars, he also tried to entice his minor singers, his chorus, his stage hands, of whom some went over to Abbey and some remained faithful to Mapleson.

Abbey brought such artists as Tamagno, Patti, and Nordica to this country at his own risk at various times. He brought Sembrich, then in her early prime and one of the greatest artists. The rest of the company — Scalchi, Campanini, Del Puente, etc. — were plunder from Mapleson. By the end of the season Abbey is said to have squandered $250,000.

Not content with this, Mr. Abbey in 1890 formed a partnership with Maurice Grau

and John B. Schoeffel, and brought many great artists to America. The company of 1890 included Adelina Patti, Emma Albani, and Lillian Nordica, Fabbri, Carbone, Ravelli, Tamagno, and several other old favourites. But in 1891 he introduced the De Reszke brothers, who have been almost annual visitors ever since, Emma Eames, who, being an American, was warmly welcomed, as was also Marie van Zandt, another American prima donna. Lasalle, Kalisch, and Lilli Lehmann, his wife, and Giulia Ravogli, also Albani and Scalchi, were included in the company, and during this season several French operas were given in French, "Lakme," "Mignon," etc., but "Die Meistersinger" was also given in Italian.

After a year of rest Abbey and Grau gave grand opera in 1893–94, when Emma Calvé, Melba, Sigrid Arnoldson, and Plançon, also Gurin Dufriche and Vignas, were newcomers.

EMMA EAMES.

Madame Melba acquired popularity almost equal to that of Patti in her best days, while Calvé created such a furore as Carmen that it was difficult to make people believe that she could assume any other rôle. When she appeared in later years as Ophelia in "Hamlet," Marguerite in "Faust," and as Santuzza in "Cavalleria Rusticana" she broke through tradition and demonstrated, or rather confirmed, her position as one of the greatest operatic artists who was ever in America.

In 1895–96 Calvé again came in the Abbey and Grau company, and, in fact, the company was much the same as in 1893–94.

Troubles gathered around his head, and in 1896 the Abbey and Grau company collapsed.

There was nothing parsimonious about the manner in which Mr. Abbey did business, and it is said that at one time no less than twenty-five hundred persons were upon the pay-roll of his company. Henry Abbey did

not long survive his financial collapse, for he died in October of the same year. He was twice married, the first time to a Miss Kingsley, of Northampton, Mass., and in 1886 to Florence Gerard, an actress, who survived him.

Mr. Abbey was in no sense a musician. Though he had been something of a cornet player in his youth, he was practically ignorant of music artistically. He was simply a speculator in the field of theatrical and operatic enterprise. He was reckless and daring, and he never long enjoyed success. His greatest successes were made in the management of Sarah Bernhardt in 1880, and of Henry Irving and Mrs. Langtry, but his operatic crash of 1884 crippled him seriously, and would have completely swamped any man with less pluck and recuperative power. He had a benefit at that time, and it netted him $30,000. He was not a man of extravagant habits, and he was a hard

worker, but like all other impresarios, he died poor.

Arditi in his "Reminiscences" brings us into contact with Henry Abbey in the following paragraph: "Henry Abbey treats his companies with every consideration; he is courteous, and ever thoughtful as to their wants and requirements. His charming wife (*née* Florence Gerard), who at that time was little more than a bride (and a sweetly pretty one), proved the life and soul of that tour, devoting herself to everybody, and doing all in her power to make things pleasant all around."

Arditi sums up the impresarios under whom he travelled in America in these words: "I have come to the conclusion that Don Francesco Marty was the most generous of men, and Max Maretzek the cleverest. Colonel Mapleson was decidedly the astutest of all directors, . . . while to Henry Abbey must be attributed every straightforward and

honourable quality. Maurice Grau was the cleverest of *entrepreneurs*."

While we have been attempting to follow the progress of grand opera in America, as indicated by the greatest companies which have appeared, it must not be forgotten that a great many, one might almost say all the most successful opera singers of the great companies, after their engagements were at an end, would form opera companies of their own under the management of some impresario, and would make tours through the country, visiting not only the chief towns but also those towns which were not large enough to support the biggest companies. Chicago soon became a great centre for all travelling companies, and there is perhaps no more concise method of showing to what extent opera had grown as a business than by presenting a summary of the season of 1879–80, of Chicago.

It will be seen that the companies here

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MAURICE GRAU.

mentioned include everything that can be classed under the head of opera, — Italian opera, English opera, French opera (which means here opera bouffe), and "Church Choir" opera, which was then fashionable.

"There have been twenty-three seasons of opera as follows: Aimée troupe, Haverly's, August 20–24; Mahn's Fatinitza troupe, Hooley's, August 25–September 6; Haverly's Church Choir troupe, September 15–20; Strakosch troupe, McVicker's, October 20–November 1; Haverly's Juvenile troupe, November 10–15; Maretzek troupe, McVicker's, November 18–29; Haverly's Juvenile troupe, second season, December 8–13; Emma Abbott troupe, December 15–20; Haverly's Church Choir troupe, second season, January 5–10; Mapleson troupe, Haverly's, January 12–24; Grau French opera troupe, Haverly's, February 2–28; D'Oyley Carte opera company, Haverly's, March 1–8; Oates troupe, Hooley's, March

8–13; same, Olympic, April 5–10; Amateur troupe, Haverly's, April 19–24; Peerless Pinafore company, Music Hall, May 31–June 21; Bijou opera company, McVicker's, June 14–19; D'Oyley Carte opera company, second season, Haverly's, June 14–19; Nathal English opera company, Hooley's, June 14–19; Mahn's opera company, McVicker's, June 14–July 5; Daly's New York company, Haverly's. These troupes have given 225 performances of opera."

CHAPTER VII.

GERMAN OPERA.

The first attempt at German opera was made in New York at Niblo's Garden, in 1855, when a company under Julius Ungher gave a season of twelve nights, during which the operas given were "Der Freischutz," "Martha," "Masaniello," "Czar und Zimmermann," etc. The star of the company was Caroline Lehmann, a singer of good ability, and other members were Madame d'Ormy, Madame Seidenburg, Schraubstadter, Quint, Vineke, etc.

Several of these operas were well-known favourites, and had been sung in English, or Italian, but now they were given in German, and *some* of the singers were Germans.

In 1855 a great effort was made to induce Wagner to visit America. An offer of $10,000 or $12,000 was suggested to him, and he was sorely tempted, for at that time he was in dire poverty. But he was writing the "Ring of the Niebelung," and he felt that his first duty was to finish this work. "Such sums as I might earn in America," he exclaimed, "people ought to give me without expecting anything in return beyond what I am actually doing, which is the best I can do. Besides this, I am much better adapted to spend $12,000 in six months than to 'earn' it. The latter I cannot do at all, for it is not my business to 'earn' money, but it is the business of my admirers to give me as much money as I want, to do my work in a cheerful mood."

In 1856 Maretzek attempted German opera by giving some extra nights to it during his regular season, but in December of that year there was a regular season of

German opera at the Broadway Theatre, when Mlle. Johansen made her début, and Beethoven's "Fidelio" was given for the first time in German with Mlle. Johannsen in the title rôle.

After this there is no record of German opera until 1859, when, under the baton of Carl Bergmann, Wagner's "Tannhäuser," was given at the Stadt Theatre. Madame Seidenburg took the part of Elizabeth, Pickaneser Tannhäuser, and Lehmann Wolfram, while the chorus was supplied by the Arion Society.

The opera was produced with moderate means, though with intelligence and enthusiasm, but being given in a small, obscure theatre, in an out-of-the-way part of New York, music lovers in general were hardly aware of the fact that "Tannhäuser" was being given when the production was suddenly withdrawn. Some objections were also made to the thoroughly German atmos-

phere pervading the whole affair. Boys went through the aisles with beer in stone mugs for the thirsty, and huge chunks of *Schweizerkäs* for the hungry.

Carl Bergmann, who figures prominently in German opera enterprises, was a member of the original Germania Orchestra, which was composed of refugees from the revolutionary troubles of 1848. He was conductor of this orchestra until its disbandment in 1854. From 1852 to 1854 he was conductor of the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston, and from 1855 until his death, in 1876, he conducted the Philharmonic Society of New York.

Carl Anschutz, who was a Wagner enthusiast and conducted the German opera in 1862, was a native of Coblenz (born 1815). In 1844 he became director of a music school in his native city, and four years later went to London, where he conducted concerts. In 1857 he was engaged by

Strakosch and Ullman as conductor of their opera company. He was considered the best conductor who had come to this country, and was a cultivated musician. He was for two years conductor of the Arion Society of New York. He died in 1870.

In 1860, also, there was a German company, of which the members were Madame Fabbri, Weinlich, Von Berkel, Quinto, and Stigelli, and two operas were given their initial American performances, viz., Flotow's "Stradella," and Halévy's "La Juive."

In 1863 again Carl Anschutz made an effort to establish German opera and gave fourteen representations in January and February of that year, resuming again in December. A larger number of operas was given, including "Fidelio," "The Magic Flute," "Joseph in Egypt," "Stradella," etc., and in January, 1864, "Tannhäuser" was revived with Carl Bergmann as conductor. The company included Mlle. Johannsen and Ma-

dame Frederici, Himmel, Graff, Habelmann, and Weinlich, besides others of less note. The operas were carefully but not sumptuously mounted, and a good artistic performance was given, with an excellent orchestra.

By this time there was considerable rivalry between the lovers of Italian opera and the lovers of German opera, and it is said that in some of the lesser cities of the United States German opera had succeeded in pushing Italian opera to the wall. Since that time the word German has developed into Wagner, and in speaking of German opera the ordinary mortal thinks only, or almost only, of that great composer and poet whose works have caused a revolution even in Italian opera.

In 1866 Adolph Neuendorf appeared as conductor of the German opera, then under Grover's management, and Joanna Rotter, Sophia Dzubia, and Wilhelm Formes were amongst the singers. Neuendorf conducted again in 1867, when a French company was

also in New York, and Madame Naddi was the favourite in both French and German companies.

In the following year Italian and German operas were given on alternate nights, with Maretzek as conductor.

On April 15, 1871, "Lohengrin" was given for the first time in America, at the Stadt Theatre, with Adolpn Neuendorf as conductor. It was so successful that it had twelve performances. The singers were Elsa, Lichtmay; Lohengrin, Habelmann; Ortrud, Madame Frederici; Henry, Franosch; Telramund, Vierling; and Herald, W. Formes.

But a far superior performance of "Lohengrin" was given by the Italian company of Strakosch, in 1874, when Campanini was Lohengrin; Nilsson, Elsa; Annie Louise Cary, Ortrud; Del Puente, Telramund; Nannetti, the King; and Blum, the Herald.

German opera was now so far established that several companies entered into the busi-

ness. W. Formes, Habelmann, and Mulder organised a company, Madame Fabbri organised a company, which gave three performances in New York, and Louise Lichtmay formed a company, in which were several new singers, viz., Pauline Bredelli, Louise Beckmann, Anna Romans, Marie Horn, and Carl Formes.

Adolph Neuendorf, who was closely identified with German opera during its early struggles for existence in this country, was born at Hamburg in 1843, and came to New York in 1855. In 1860 he went to Brazil on a concert tour. Two years later he became an orchestral player in New York, and in the following year he was musical director of the German theatre in Milwaukee for a few months, returning to New York in the same year. He became a pupil of Carl Anschutz, and under him chorus-master and assistant conductor. From 1867 to 1871 he was musical director of the Stadt Theatre,

during which time he gave the first performance of "Lohengrin," and introduced Wachtel to the American public.

In 1872 he was conductor at the Academy of Music of the company in which Parepa-Rosa, Adelaide Phillips, Wachtel, and Santley sang.

From 1872 to 1883 he managed the German Theatre in New York, during which period he again engaged Wachtel and brought out Madame Pappenheim.

In 1876 Neuendorf went to the first Wagner Festival at Bayreuth as correspondent of the *Staats Zeitung*, and the following year he was musical director of the Wagner Festival in New York. In 1878 he was elected conductor of the New York Philharmonic Society, and in 1880 conducted the Materna concerts. From 1884 to 1889 he was conductor of the promenade concerts in Boston which were held after the Symphony season, and from 1889 to 1891 he

travelled as conductor of the Emma Juch Opera Company, and created a Wagner craze in Mexico. From 1893–95 he was in Vienna, where his wife, Madame Janushowsky, was prima donna at the opera-house. He died in 1898.

In 1875 there was the Wachtel Grand Opera Company, of which De Vivo was the manager, and in which Madame Eugenie Pappenheim made her American début, but its repertoire was not confined to German opera.

The first American performance of Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" was given by the Kellogg Opera Company, S. Behrens, conductor, on January 26, 1876, and in the same year a Wagner festival was given in New York, in which the following operas were presented: "The Flying Dutchman," "Lohengrin," "Tannhäuser," "Die Walküre" (for the first time out of Germany). The cast for "Die Walküre" was: Brünnhilde, Madame

Pappenheim; Seiglinde, Canissa; Siegmund, Bischoff; Wotan, Preusser; and Fricka, Mrs. Listner.

In 1878 a short and financially unsuccessful season was given by the Pappenheim Opera Company, during which Wagner's "Rienzi" was sung for the first time in America, with Charles R. Adams, Madame Pappenheim, and Madame Human in the cast. During this season Madame Rudersdorff made her first appearance as Ortrud in "Lohengrin."

Eugenie Pappenheim is an Austrian, and first came before the public as an opera singer in 1872, when she became a member of the company at Mannheim, going thence to Hamburg, and later to Berlin, where she made a great success as Leonora in "Fidelio." In 1875 she came to America and became a member of the Wachtel Opera Company, making her first appearance at the Academy of Music in New York on October 18th in

"Les Huguenots," under the baton of Adolph Neuendorf. She sang in a number of operas, but her greatest success was made as Elsa in "Lohengrin," with Wachtel in the title rôle.

In 1876 Madame Pappenheim was one of the singers in the Wagner festival given in New York.

Madame Pappenheim remained in America until 1878, when the Pappenheim Opera Company was formed, with Madame Human, Adelaide Phillips, Charles R. Adams, and others, and Max Maretzek as conductor. The operas given were "Les Huguenots," "Lohengrin," "Tannhäuser," "Il Trovatore," and "Rienzi," the last receiving its first presentation in America.

Charles R. Adams was at the head of the Pappenheim Opera Company, and it is related that, on unfolding his scheme of German opera to Maretzek, the latter approved of it as a most worthy enterprise, but, he added, "for Heaven's sake, Adams, give 'Lucia'

once a week, so that you can pay your singers." German opera was struggling for popularity, and had not yet succeeded. Notwithstanding the singing of Italian operas, the enterprise was not a success, and Madame Pappenheim next appeared in London, where she was successful. Her stage career was not long. She married a Mr. Ahrendt and established herself as a vocal teacher in New York, where she has been successful and popular.

Madame Pappenheim's voice was not remarkable for quality or compass, but she was an exceptionally good actress and a careful singer.

Hermine Rudersdorff was born in 1822 at Ivanowsky in the Ukraine. Her father was a violinist engaged at that place, but he afterward moved to Hamburg. After studying in Paris with Bordogni and in Milan with De Micherout, Mlle. Rudersdorff sang in concerts in Germany, one of her engagements

being that of soprano soloist at the production of Mendelssohn's "Lobgesang" at Leipzig in 1840.

In 1844 she married Doctor Küchenmeister, a professor of mathematics. Her first appearance in opera was in 1841, at Carlsruhe, and her career was a long one, for she sang in opera in America in 1878, when she was a member of the Pappenheim company. She was, however, more remarkable as a singer of oratorio than of opera, and her powerful voice would tell with great effect against the band and chorus. She possessed excellent power of declamation and certainty of execution, and was a thorough musician. She was one of the soloists at the Boston Jubilees of 1871 and 1872, after which she took up her residence in this country, and devoted her time principally to teaching. She died in New York in 1882.

When Madame Rudersdorff was studying the part of Ortrud, in which she appeared in

New York for the first time in 1878, she slipped and fell in her studio, dislocating her shoulder. This happened some few days before the performance. Nothing daunted by the accident, she persevered with her study, even keeping up some of her teaching, and made her appearance without showing any signs of the suffering which she was enduring.

The next decided step forward in German opera took place in 1880, when Theodore Thomas gave the third act of "Die Götterdämmerung" at the New York and Brooklyn Philharmonic Societies, with Campanini as Siegfried, Remmertz as Hagen, and Steinbuch as Gunther. This was followed up four years later by a series of Wagner festivals, for which purpose Theodore Thomas was instrumental in bringing to this country the three great Wagnerian singers, Materna, Scaria, and Winkelmann.

Mr. Thomas had long cherished the idea of

reviving German opera in such a manner as to eclipse all previous efforts. The success of his Wagner festivals indicated that the time was ripe for the execution of his plan, which was nothing less than a complete theatrical production of Wagner's later music-dramas.

Mr. Theodore Thomas had already enjoyed a long and successful career as conductor. In 1861, he began to form an orchestra which for years was the pride of New York. In order to keep his men together he started summer festivals in 1866, and was for years the conductor of the Cincinnati May Festivals. In 1869 he began to travel with his orchestra, and for nine years made annual rounds of the great cities. For a time he was director of the Cincinnati Conservatory, but in 1880 he returned to New York, where he was conductor of the Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1890, he was called to Chicago to conduct the Chicago Orchestra, and he has remained there ever since.

THEODORE THOMAS.

As long ago as 1870, Mr. Thomas introduced the "Ride of the Valkyries" to his American audiences, and shortly afterward the "Magic Fire Scene" from the same opera ("Die Walküre") and "Siegfried's Funeral March" were given by his orchestra. It is said that he obtained his copies of these works surreptitiously, through Franz Liszt, who had them copied without Wagner's knowledge, for Wagner was afraid that if copies of his works were sent to America he would lose his European copyrights, while Liszt believed that no better way could be found to spread the fame of the composer than by playing his music.

During his conductorship of the American Opera Company Mr. Thomas produced two works for the first time in this country, "The Taming of the Shrew," by Hermann Goetz, and Rubinstein's "Nero."

On the collapse of the Abbey Italian enterprise in 1884, the question of German

opera was again agitated. An influential journal wrote:

"The most deplorable feature of our operatic seasons is the absence of Wagner's operas, fragments of which, when performed in the concert-hall, are received with intense enthusiasm. The efforts of the Freyer troupe in 1876–77 cannot be classed as performances, and, if they had any effect at all, it was injurious to Wagner's cause. 'Der Fliegende Holländer,' and 'Lohengrin' are the only operas by Richard Wagner, the greatest composer born in the nineteenth century, that have been heard at the Academy of Music during the last seven years. Year in, year out, managers have presented the old, threadbare Italian operas, in which, in the most dramatic moment, the tenor steps to the footlight and sings a scale, or the soprano dies with a trill on a high note.

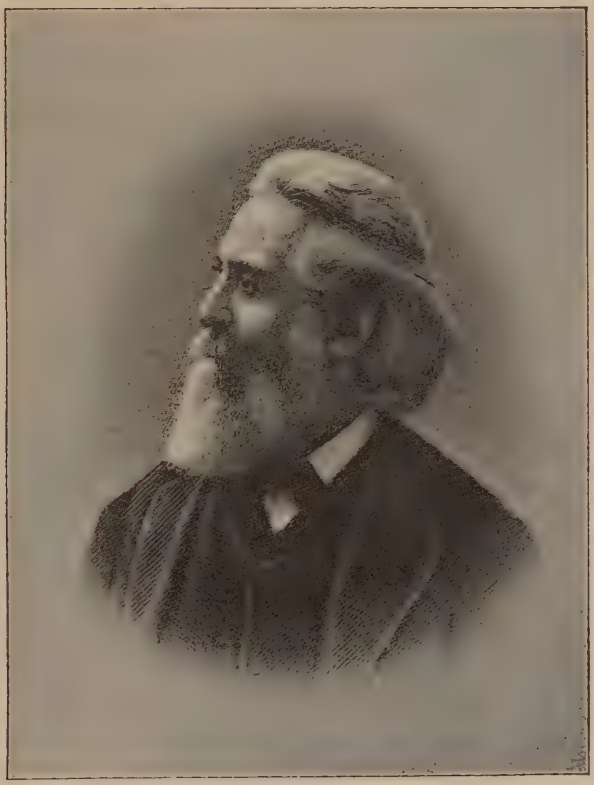
"It may be urged, in extenuation of this deplorable condition of our operatic affairs,

that no manager can produce novelties without such subsidies from the state as are available abroad. In answer we may say that the experiment has never been tried here with a first-class company. If some enterprising manager will organise a troupe whose artistic merits are above suspicion, and will proceed to give, in addition to the leading Italian operas, such works as 'Fidelio,' the principal dramatic compositions of Mozart, Cherubini, and Weber, 'Rienzi,' 'Der Fliegende Holländer,' 'Tannhäuser,' 'Lohengrin,' 'Tristan und Isolde,' 'Die Meistersinger,' 'Das Rheingold,' 'Die Walküre,' 'Siegfried,' and 'Die Götterdämmerung,' — and will promise 'Parsifal,' — we venture to predict that every representation will draw to his house the lovers of music who crowd Steinway Hall and the Academy to hear Doctor Damrosch and Mr. Theodore Thomas produce fragments of such works without scenery or physical dramatic action."

Theodore Thomas was not alone in his desire to push forward the cause of Wagnerian opera, for Dr. Leopold Damrosch, conductor of the Symphony Society in New York, was equally enthusiastic, and was a personal friend of Wagner.

Doctor Damrosch had played first violin in Liszt's orchestra at Weimar, and was so highly esteemed by that great man that Liszt dedicated to him a symphonic poem, "Le Triomphe Funebre de Tasso."

Doctor Damrosch was now sent to Europe to secure singers for a season of German opera. He made provisional agreements with Mesdames Materna and Hanfstängl, and with Herren Schott, Robinson, and others, and cabled to New York for permission to confirm the contracts. But the directors were still undecided. As time passed on the singers became restive, and the scheme almost fell through, when at last the necessary permission arrived. The



DR. LEOPOLD DAMROSCH.

indefatigable zeal of Doctor Damrosch was such that before the end of the season his health gave way, and his death took place in January, 1885.

The following review of the opening of the season gives an excellent description of the arrangements and of the chief singers:

"An audience that packed the Metropolitan Opera House from floor to ceiling greeted Doctor Damrosch's German singers in 'Tannhäuser' last night. While popular enthusiasm was aroused only a few times, the general impression which the performance left was excellent. The music of the concerted numbers and many of the solos and choruses was rendered with dramatic breadth and dignity, and with a fine balance of the parts that gave true key to Wagner's meaning; and the delightful unity of purpose that pervaded both the histrionic and musical efforts of all preserved the continuity of the dramatic thought, and made the work as a

whole thoroughly artistic. The orchestra was directed with admirable discretion and taste by Doctor Damrosch, who was called before the curtain. The chorus not only sang well, but violated all traditions of the Italian stage by taking an intelligent part in dramatic action, thus filling out the picture instead of posing as motionless though vociferous spectators of what was going on. The concerted music was superb, the fact that the orchestra was sunk below the level of the floor leaving the accompaniment in exactly right prominence, always audible, yet never overpowerful. The beauty of the music itself, coupled with the fine intelligence of the singers, produced a delightful impression. As for the individual singers, Herr Robinson, baritone, won, as Wolfram, the greatest popular success. His smooth, rich, resonant voice, and his Italian cantabile style of singing made him an immediate favourite with the mass of the audience. His

acting was marked by grace and force, so that altogether he made a decided hit. Madame Kraus, as Elizabeth, gave a performance of beautiful and artistic proportions, reminding one somewhat of Albani by her voice, method, and carriage. She has a rich, soft, Italian voice of good range, and sings with great expression and refinement. One hesitates to say that Herr Schott (tenor) was a disappointment, yet this would probably express the sentiment of nine-tenths of those present. His voice and style of singing contrasted strangely with the two artists to whom I have referred. He seems on the first hearing to be adapted to the declamatory style of Wagner's latest operas, rather than to his earlier and more rhythmical. Hence, while he showed little sympathy with the smoothly flowing, sensuous music in the Venusberg score, and failed to delight one in the tournament of the minstrels, because he sacrificed beauty and evenness of

tone to dramatic intensity, he rose to a high pitch of excellence in the strong declamatory passages of the last act."

Madame Schroeder-Hanfstängl also made her first appearance in this country under Doctor Damrosch in the season of 1884–85, and appeared as Elsa in "Lohengrin," Donna Anna in "Don Giovanni," Gilda in "Rigoletto," etc. She came again in 1888–89 and again in 1896, when she was said to be one of the greatest bravura singers in the world. Madame Hanfstängl was born at Bremen in 1848, and in 1866 was engaged at the Théâtre Lyrique in Paris. After the Franco-German war she was at Stuttgart and Vienna. It is said that she was very highly esteemed by Gounod and by Ambroise Thomas.

On the death of Doctor Damrosch, the directors of the Metropolitan Opera House invited Anton Seidl to assume the duties of conductor.

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ANTON SEIDL.

Anton Seidl was born at Budapest in 1850, and at the age of twenty entered the Leipzig Conservatory, where he studied for two years, and then became a private pupil of Hans Richter, at that time director of the opera at Budapest. Shortly after this Wagner wrote to Richter asking him for a thoroughly capable young man to act as his assistant and secretary, — a man with exceptional musical qualifications, writing a good hand and well versed in orchestration, to help him in the work of preparing for the first production of the "Ring" at Bayreuth.

Seidl was the man selected by Richter to undertake this task, and for five years he was a member of Wagner's household, during which he made copies of the score of the "Ring," and assisted in the work connected with the composition of "Parsifal" He also acted as *repetiteur* for the chorus and subordinate soloists.

In 1878 Seidl went to Vienna as stage-

manager of the opera-house, to superintend the production of the Wagner operas then being brought out at Vienna for the first time. The next year he became conductor at Leipzig, and the following year produced the "Ring" at the Victoria Theatre in Berlin, under the personal supervision of Wagner. In 1882 he conducted the "Ring" in London, and during the next two years he was occupied in superintending the production of Wagner's operas in various parts of Europe, being sent by the composer to see that everything was done according to his desires.

In 1885 he was conducting the opera at Bremen, where he met and married the singer, Augusta Kraus, who had sung under Doctor Damrosch and who came with Seidl to America when he was called to the conductorship of the Metropolitan Opera House. She sang in many of the operas given under his baton.

In 1891 Italian opera again reigned

supreme at the Metropolitan Opera House, and Mr. Seidl became conductor of the New York Philharmonic Society, Mr. Theodore Thomas having been called to Chicago. In 1895 he again assumed the duties of conductor at the opera-house and remained in that post until his death, though he also went to London and to Bayreuth in 1897.

During his American residence Seidl was in great demand as conductor of orchestral concerts, and his labours were by no means confined to the Philharmonic or the Opera. In his comparatively short career he attained a position, in regard to the wide range of his influence, such as has been held by almost no other conductor.

In regard to his methods Mr. Krehbiel wrote as follows: "Despite his belief that an ounce of gift outweighed a pound of schooling in the art which he practised, and that finish in detail was wholly subordinate to general effect, nothing was plainer to the

careful observer of Mr. Seidl's recreative processes (for such all his readings were) than that it was his knowledge of the potency of details, and his capacity for lifting those of essential value into prominence, upon which his superb triumphs depended. As a master of climax I have never met his equal; and he attained his climaxes, in which the piling of Pelion upon Ossa by other men was ex ceeded, by the most patient and reposeful accumulation of material, its proper adjustment, and its firm maintenance in popular notice when once it had been gained. The more furious the tempest of passion which he worked up, the more firmly did he hold the forces in rein until the moment arrived when they were to be loosed, so that all would be swept away in the *mêlée*. None of his *confrères* of Bayreuthian antecedents can work so directly, so elementally, upon an audience as did he. With him in the chair it was only the most case-hardened

critic who could think of comparative *tempi* and discriminate between means of effect. As for the rest, professional and layman, dilettante and ignorant, their souls were his to play with so they were at all susceptible to the kind of music which he preached as an evangel. Puissant as he was when conducting 'Fidelio,' or putting a symphony or opera 'through the Wagnerian sieve' — as Albert Niemann once described the process to which he had subjected 'La Juive,' much to the vitalisation of the old French work — he was transfigured when he conducted 'Parsifal' or 'Tristan und Isolde.'"

Anton Seidl died very suddenly in New York on the night of March 28, 1898.

Under Seidl's baton "Die Meistersinger" was performed for the first time in America, on January 4, 1886, with Fischer as Hans Sachs; Stritt as Walther; Kraus, Eva; Brandt, Magdalena; Staudigl, Pogner; Kemlitz, Beckmesser; and Krämer, David.

"Tristan und Isolde" was sung for the first time in America on December 1, 1886, with Fraulein Lilli Lehmann as Isolde; Niemann, Tristan; Brandt, Brängane; Robinson, Kurwenal; Von Milde, Melot; and Fischer, King Mark.

"Siegfried" was first performed November 9, 1887, with Alvary as Siegfried; Lehmann, Brünnhilde; Fischer, Wotan; Ferenzy, Mime; Elmblad, Fafner; Von Milde, Alberich; and Seidl-Kraus, the Bird.

"Die Gotterdämmerung" had its first representation on January 25, 1888, with Niemann as Siegfried; Robinson, Gunther; Fischer, Hagen; Von Milde, Alberich; Lehmann, Brünnhilde; Seidl-Kraus, Gutrune; and Traubmann, Brandt, and Meisslinger, Rhine-daughters.

"Das Rheingold" was given for the first time January 2, 1889, with Alvary as Loge; Fischer, Wotan; Grienauer, Donner; Mittelhauer, Froh; Beck, Alberich; Sedlmayer,

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LILLI LEHMANN.

Mime; Weiss, Fafner; Mödlinger, Fasolt; Moran-Olden, Fricka; Bettaque, Freia; and Traubmann, Koschoska, and Reil, Rhine-daughters.

Fraulein Lilli Lehmann was considered to be the greatest of Wagnerian sopranos of her day. Her voice rivalled that of Materna in power, without losing its sensuous beauty, and it was full of deep and genuine emotion. Moreover, she was an artist of great versatility, and could sing Norma or Valentine as well as the great Wagnerian rôles, — Isolde, Brünnhilde, etc. Although she had been on the stage for many years before making her appearance in America, and had acquired considerable fame abroad, it was not until her appearance in New York that the most important part of her career commenced.

Fraulein Lehmann made her début in 1866, at Prague, and after ten years, during which she had been confined to subordinate rôles, she was engaged to sing the parts of the

first Rhine Maiden and the Forest Bird at the Bayreuth festival. On appearing in New York her great powers were at once recognised, and for several years she was prominent in German opera in this country. She married Paul Kalisch, a tenor singer, who developed into an excellent artist, and sung with her in 1896.

In 1892 Madame Lehmann left this country, broken in health, and sought retirement in Germany. But after four years of rest she again appeared upon the stage, and in 1896 was a member of the Damrosch company. "Years of absence from us," wrote one of the critics, "have not lessened the majesty of her presence, the beauty of her voice, and the dignity of her art, even if her tones are somewhat robbed of their old-time volume, when their utmost plenitude is needed." She is regarded as the greatest dramatic singer of her time and the greatest interpreter of Wagner, while Sem-

brich is the greatest lyric singer, and one of the finest interpreters of Mozart of her century.

Herr Niemann came to this country with the reputation of being the greatest Wagnerian tenor. He sang the part of Tannhäuser when that opera was produced in Paris in 1861, and created the part of Siegmund at Bayreuth in 1876, and is said to have done much to popularise Wagner's operas. He did not sing the part of Siegfried until he appeared in New York, when he was fifty-seven years of age. At that time he was, of course, past his prime, and failed to please many of the public, to whom superb acting and great emotional expression were insufficient to compensate for a voice no longer fresh, and apt to stray from the true pitch.

Herr Fischer was, after the death of Scaria, considered the best dramatic bass on the stage. Possessed of a mellow and sono

rous voice, his work was characterised by passion, conscientiousness, and distinct enunciation, and his impersonations of Wotan and Hans Sachs were considered marvellous.

A singer of renown who made his appearance in 1890 was Heinrich Gudehus, the son of a schoolmaster of Celle, near Hanover. He made his first appearance as Nadori in "Jessonda," in 1871, at Berlin, continued his studies for three years, and then appeared at Riga, where he was successful, and was subsequently engaged at several places until, in 1880, he settled in Dresden. Two years later he made his reputation at the second performance of "Parsifal," at Bayreuth, and in 1884 he made a great success in London as Walther in "Die Meistersinger," and at some concert performances of "Parsifal" given at the Albert Hall under the direction of Mr. Joseph Barnby.

In 1890 he made his appearance in America under Anton Seidl.

One of the most successful of German singers was Max Alvary, who first came to America in 1885, appearing as Don José in "Carmen," under Seidl's baton. He was not a singer of great reputation abroad, but was young and comparatively unknown. He began his work in America under great disadvantages, but he returned to Germany a tenor of high rank. In fact, few tenors have been greater favourites, nor did his popularity wane during the years in which he was before the public. He was a man of good education, and an actor of fine intellectuality, who studied each part deeply, even to its smallest details. While he was not especially a handsome man off the stage, he was always dramatic, graceful, and picturesque on the stage, and his characterisation of Siegfried was considered almost ideal.

When Goldmark's "Queen of Sheba" was given in 1885, Alvary sang the part of Assad so effectively that he may almost be con-

sidered the "creator" of that part in this country. Adolar in "Euryanthe," Alvarez in "Cortez," Merlin in Goldmark's opera of that name, were also parts in which he excelled, but he is remembered best by his assumption of the rôles of Siegfried and Loge.

Alvary was not an extraordinary singer. He had a fine, round, firm voice of wide and even compass, not ideally trained, but he was an artist in a broad sense.

He returned to Germany in 1891, coming back to America in 1895, and finding his popularity undiminished. On his return to Germany, at the end of the season, his health failed, and in 1898 he died.

After 1890 Italian opera again became supreme, though many German singers were employed, and many German operas were sung (in Italian). But in 1895, Walter Damrosch, the second son of Dr. Leopold Damrosch, made an effort to reëstablish Ger-

MAX ALVARY.

man opera, and his enterprise extended over several years. During the last decade of the nineteenth century, however, the theory of combination and amalgamation, which was rapidly developing in the business world, had its effect upon opera, and under Maurice Grau the opera company became a huge enterprise containing singers of all nations, and giving operas in French, German, and Italian.

In 1895 Damrosch gave a season of German opera at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, and in some of the larger cities. He brought over from Germany several new singers, besides some who had been heard in America before, such as Alvary. His new singers were Rothmühl, a tenor, Brema and Sucher, and Madame Johanna Gadski, soprano, who has been in America almost every season since, and has become one of the most popular singers before the public.

During his second season Damrosch

brought out Madame Klafsky, and produced his own opera, "The Scarlet Letter," founded upon Nathaniel Hawthorne's great novel. For his third season he brought no new singers, but produced Scharwenka's "Mataswintha." The following season the interest seemed to dwindle away, and this may be considered the end of German opera as an individual enterprise.

Madame Rosa Sucher gained great renown in Germany by her singing of "Isolde" at Bayreuth in 1886. Madame Sucher was the wife of Josef Sucher, conductor of the Hof-oper Theatre at Berlin. Her maiden name was Hasselbeck, and she was born at Velburg in the Palatinate. Her first engagement was secured when she was nineteen years of age. In 1877 she was prima donna at the City Theatre at Leipzig, where Sucher was then conductor, and it was at Leipzig that she married him. In 1879 she and her husband went to Hamburg as prima donna

and conductor. In 1882 they first visited England, where Madame Sucher made a favourable impression as a singer and actress in a wide range of parts. She returned to Germany, from America, disappointed, for she did not make the success here which was anticipated.

Frau Klafsky was a member of the Damrosch company in 1895–96, during which season her husband, Otto Lohse, conducted some of the performances. Katarina Klafsky was born in 1855 at St. Johann, Hungary. She was obliged to earn her living while she was still quite young, and as she had a good voice she went to Vienna and joined the chorus of a light opera company, at the same time taking vocal lessons. After a time she secured an engagement as soloist at Salzburg, and afterward at the City Theatre, Leipzig. Here she married Herr Liebermann in 1876. But Klafsky was ambitious and was determined to become an artist, so after six years

of married life she went to Italy with an opera company, and Herr Liebermann sailed for the United States, where he never became one of fortune's favourites. In 1886 Madame Klafsky secured a divorce and afterward married Otto Lohse.

In 1883 she was called to the Bremen theatre, two years later to the Hamburg City Theatre, and in 1892 and 1894 she sang the leading Wagner rôles in London. During her tour in America she appeared in New York, Boston, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and New Orleans, and became extremely popular, and the news of her death in the following year was received with genuine sorrow.

Madame Klafsky possessed an enormous voice of exceptional compass and rich quality, and her temperament was intensely dramatic. But her art lacked refinement. She was of most imposing presence, and there was something royal and barbarically splendid about her poses and gestures. She was a Brünn-

hilde of the real Valkyr stamp, a superb Elizabeth and Isolde. She visited America when she was at the height of her career. Her death was the result of an unsuccessful operation for trephining, and she was taken away in her prime.

Madame Johanna Gadski made her first appearance in the United States in 1895 during the season of the Damrosch German opera at the Metropolitan in New York. She was one of the youngest of the Wagnerian singers, being not very much past twenty years of age, and she quickly won popularity.

Madame Gadski began her career at Stettin, where she sang in concerts at the age of eleven. Her operatic début took place at Berlin in 1891, and she became a special favourite in Germany as a singer of Mozart's operas, having in her repertoire nearly all of that composer's works.

Madame Gadski sang again in America dur

ing the following season (1895–96), and has been in evidence every season since, becoming one of the most popular singers, and being known almost all over the country. Her husband is an Austrian army ex-officer named Tauscher.

She has presented one of the most poetic and admirable interpretations of Elizabeth in "Tannhäuser" ever seen in this country.

Madame Johanna Gadski may be classed as one of the best, the most richly endowed of the younger German sopranos, either lyric or dramatic. She has a beautiful voice, a method such as few German singers possess, a fine and temperamental intelligence, and the golden gift of sincerity in everything she interprets.

Ernest Kraus was a young tenor with an excellent voice, incapable of expressing the softer emotions, a man of magnificent bearing and a good actor. He was regarded as a promising successor to Alvary. Kraus

JOHANNA GADSKI.

was born in 1864. He sang at Weisbaden and Mannheim, and was later engaged to succeed Gudehus at the Royal Opera in Berlin. His principal rôles are Lohengrin, Tannhäuser, Siegfried, and Faust.

A tenor who sprang suddenly into fame was Barron Berthald, and he has been able to hold the position which his good luck placed him in. Berthald was a tenor at the Castle Square Theatre in Boston, where he was a member of the regular stock company. One night, when "Lohengrin" was to be given at the Boston Theatre, and Jean de Reszke was to sing the title rôle, the great tenor was indisposed, and at the last moment decided that it would be impossible to sing. There was no substitute available in the company, but some one connected with the theatre happened to know Barron Berthald, and was aware that he had studied the part of Lohengrin. A carriage was sent to the Castle Square Theatre, where Berthald was

ready to appear on the stage for his regular part. He was hurried down to the Boston Theatre and after some delay the performance was begun. Berthald made an excellent impression. The following season he was engaged by Walter Damrosch, and since then he has appeared in Germany and with the Maurice Grau Company.

While it is claimed by many that the day of Italian opera has passed and that German opera is the only musical feast fit for the intellectual music lover, this statement must be taken with considerable allowance for enthusiasm in a still struggling cause. It is true that Wagner's operas have become more popular; in fact, the greatest audience in Boston during the season 1901 was on the night when "Tristan und Isolde" was given, and many people were unable to obtain seats. It is also true that the older composers of Italian opera are superseded, — Verdi, Donizetti, Mozart, are seldom heard, and then only

to exploit some *coloratura* singer. "Il Trovatore," "Rigoletto," "Traviata," still retain a feeble hold; "Fidelio," "Don Giovanni" are occasionally heard. There are modern Italian composers and modern French composers, but Bizet, Massenet, and Reyer have not yet eclipsed Gounod; Puccini, Mascagni, Boito, and Leoncavallo have not yet entirely superseded Verdi. But modern ideas and modern orchestration, and above all artistic unity of modern works appeal to the modern audience.

A careful scrutiny of existing conditions will show that the popularity of the German operas in these days is largely attributable to the fact that many of the "great stars" are singing in them, and that an opera, no matter what school or language, falls flat (under the star system) unless the great stars appear. As yet the singer is greater than the work.

CHAPTER VIII.

GRAND OPERA OF RECENT YEARS.

THE most important operatic doings of the season of 1897–98 were under the management of Walter Damrosch and Charles A. Ellis. Mr. Ellis, a Bostonian, was, as a New York journalist put it, "wooed from the cold chaste occupation of managing the Boston Symphony Orchestra," an occupation which, by the way, he continues to enjoy. He had managed with success an opera company, of which Madame Melba was the particular attraction, and now, in company with Mr. Damrosch, he stepped into the footprints of Maretzek, Strakosch, Mapleson, Abbey, and Grau. The chief prima donnas of the season were Melba, Nordica, and Gadski,

while Kraus, Salignac, Rothmühl, and Ibos were the chief tenors, Campanari and Bispham the baritones, Stehman, Fischer, and Boudouresque basses. Mesdames Van Cauteren and Mattfield were the contraltos.

But several younger and newer singers were introduced, — Madame Marie Barna, Madame Stella Brazzi, and Mlle. Toronta.

Madame Barna is a Californian, the daughter of Judge Barnard, of San Francisco. She had so far succeeded in opera abroad as to have secured a contract for three years in London at Drury Lane, but the death of Sir Augustus Harris cancelled this contract, and Madame Barna returned to the Continent and appeared in Italy. Her voice is a soprano of large range and much power.

Madame Stella Brazzi is a native of Brattleboro, Vt., and the daughter of French parents. After about six years' experience in opera abroad she became a member of the Damrosch-Ellis company. Her

voice is a contralto with mezzo range, and she possesses histrionic ability. Signor Bimboni was assistant conductor.

This season was not marked by anything in the nature of novelty. The company travelled as far as the Pacific Coast, and the only event of any thrilling interest occurred in San Francisco, a city which always excels in excitement. It was during a performance of "Rigoletto" and in the third act that a steam-pipe burst under the stage, and the steam ascended in great clouds. Confusion reigned in the audience, for it looked as if the theatre was on fire. The curtain was rung down and the steam turned off, while, in order to allay fear, the band played the overture to Zampa, and behind the scenes Campanari added to the good cheer by playing a piano. Presently the curtain was raised and the opera proceeded, but the plumbers now arrived and commenced hammering underneath the stage.

That trouble having been dealt with, all went well for a time, but while Campanari was singing the prologue to "I Pagliacci" and Madame Melba was standing ready for her appearance, a sudden uproar commenced, and the audience was once more thrown into wild excitement. Every one tried to rush from the theatre, and Melba was carried to her room in a fainting condition. A stable near by had caught fire, and every one thought that the theatre itself was in flames. The singers rushed away without waiting to change their costumes, and many ludicrous scenes took place. Seldom has a performance of opera been given subject to so many nerve-straining conditions.

Since 1898 the grand opera in America has been managed by Mr. Maurice Grau, whose long experience in similar enterprises has enabled him to do things on a larger scale than had before been attempted. Mr. Grau had for years managed French opera

bouffe and theatrical companies on both sides of the Atlantic.

In his company of 1898 he practically combined three companies, Italian, French and German, and the majority of his leading singers were able to sing in all three languages and according to the several schools represented.

The company included Madame Marcella Sembrich, whose absence of nearly twenty years caused her to be regarded as a newcomer; Nordica, Eames, and Lehmann, who were all well known. Brema, Suzanne Adams, Marie Engle were among the chief stars, while Madame Schumann-Heink became immediately popular. Amongst the men, Jean de Reszke, Albert Saleza, Andreas Dippel, Salignac, Van Dyck, Henri Albers represented a wide variety of styles amongst the tenors, and for baritones and basses, Victor Maurel, Edouard de Reszke, Van Rooy, Bispham, Lempriere Pringle, Plançon, Cam-

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MARCELLA SEMBRICH.

panari, Jacques Bars, Carbone, Muhlmann, made a strong force.

During the New York season Wagner had forty-six representations, Gounod sixteen, Meyerbeer nine, Mozart eight, Verdi ten, and Donizetti two.

One performance for a Seidl memorial brought receipts of no less than $16,000, and the most notable performance of the season is said to have been one of "Don Giovanni," with Victor Maurel as the Don; Lilli Lehmann, Donna Anna; Nordica, Donna Elvira; Sembrich, Zerlina; Edouard de Reszke, Leporello; Carbone, Massetto; and Salignac, Don Ottavio.

Signor Mancinelli, who has become well known as a conductor, was imported by Abbey and Grau in 1893, after having been conductor at Covent Garden and Drury Lane for some seven years. He was a native of Orvieto, and had been so imbued with the desire to become a musician that in his youth

he ran away from home, and, though captured and brought back, his determination broke down parental opposition, and he became a violoncellist, joining the opera orchestra at Rome in 1870, and from that beginning rising step by step. He is an Italian of such Wagnerian proclivities that he is called "Il Wagnerista." He has also written several works, of which his opera "Ero e Leandro" is the best known, and was given in New York in 1899, with Emma Eames, Saleza, and Plançon.

Signor Bevignani also made his first bow to an American audience this same season, alternating as conductor with Mancinelli.

In 1883–84 Marcella Sembrich had visited us, singing in opera at the Metropolitan. She was then recognised as a young artist of splendid voice, of exceptional technical cultivation in *coloratura*, of vivid temperament, of keen intelligence and no small dramatic fervour. The remembrance in which she has

been held here during her long absence was rewarded by finding her a more richly gifted and accomplished artist than ever. Her personality, now mature, is not less engaging than when still girlish, and she achieved a new and complete success. Her repertoire is chiefly Mozartian, and of the later Italian writers, most of whose measures are only sufferable to the present generation when sung with the elegance and dignity that she gives them. On account of her success it was suggested that a Mozartian Cycle should be given.

During the season of 1900 Madame Sembrich remained in America as prima donna of an opera and concert company under the management of Mr. Clarence L. Graff, who had for three years, 1896 to 1899, been manager of the Damrosch Opera Company, and for the season of 1899–1900 manager of a company of which Madame Gadski, Mr. Bispham, and Mr. Damrosch were the prin-

cipal members. The Sembrich company made an extended tour through the United States, giving such operas as "Il Barbiere," "Don Pasquale," "Faust," but owing to indisposition of the prima donna the tour was brought to an end in San Francisco, and Madame Sembrich returned to Germany.

Madame Ernestine Schumann-Heink is a native of Leiben, near Prague, and is the daughter of an Austrian officer, whose name is Roessler. She first appeared in opera at Dresden, where she sung the part of Azucana at the Royal Theatre in 1878, and was a member of the company for three years. In 1882 she married Heink and left the stage for some time, but late in the following year she appeared at Hamburg. Some seven years later she was engaged at Kroll's Theatre in Berlin, where she became very popular. In 1893 she secured a divorce from her husband and married Paul Schumann, the stage-manager, of the Thalia

Theatre at Hamburg. In 1899 she was appointed a member of the Berlin Opera Company. In America she has also become very popular on account of the rich quality of her voice, her dramatic power, and her genial personality.

Few contraltos possess voices of such evenness throughout, for the transition from one register to another is imperceptible even to acutely trained ears. Madame Schumann-Heink is a woman of great simplicity and naturalness of manner, and is the mother of a large family. She first came to America in 1896 and the following year joined the Metropolitan Opera Company.

Andreas Dippel first sang in America in 1890, when he was a member of the German opera company under the baton of Anton Seidl. He returned to America in 1898 with a big European reputation, having been engaged, since 1893, as one of the principal tenors of the Royal Court Opera at Vienna,

alternating with Van Dyck. Dippel sang the part of Siegfried on his return to this country, and, in spite of the memory of Alvary, was very successful. Herr Dippel is able to sing Italian, French, or German opera, each in its own language. He has had the honour of singing before the Czar of Russia, and he has taken the part of Parsifal at Bayreuth. His most successful rôles are Parsifal and Siegfried.

Ernest Van Dyck is noted for his declamatory style, in which he excels.

Anton Van Rooy, whose assumption of the part of Wotan has given him great renown, also visited America under Mr. Grau's management in 1900, and delighted his audiences by his broad style and perfect diction, as well as by his noble appearance and dignified bearing.

Madame Felia Litvinne, who came to America in the season of 1897–98 in order to take the parts which had been assigned

to Madame Klafsky, was originally brought to this country by Colonel Mapleson in 1885, when she made her début at the Academy of Music in New York in a performance of "Il Trovatore." Although she made a favourable impression, she did not create any furore. On her return to Europe she enjoyed a good career at Brussels and elsewhere, and on her return to this country, in 1897, she had matured a great deal. She was spoken of as a handsome woman, with a Wagnerian goddess physique, charming expression, and broadly dramatic style. Her voice was called a true dramatic soprano of great volume and agreeable quality, but again she made no furore. Madame Litvinne is one of three sisters named Schutz, who have all been on the operatic stage. One retired, and one married Edouard de Reszke. Her greatest success here was in her portrayal of Chimene in "Le Cid."

Guillaume Ibos, who was a member of the

Damrosch-Ellis company of 1898–99, was born in Toulouse in 1862. He entered the military college of St. Cyr and became a cavalry officer, but soon gave up the military profession for that of music, and entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1883. He made his operatic début two years later, and sang with success in Paris, Brussels, Spain, Poland, and Russia, during the following years.

His voice is a tenor of great compass and beautiful quality, and his figure is graceful and athletic. He was mentioned by a New York critic as a "well meaning but inefficient gentleman, who sings with a tremolo, and never rises above mediocrity."

Marcel Maurice Boudouresque was bass at the Paris Grand Opéra for ten years before he made his first American appearance in 1894, and for ten years he had travelled in Europe and South America. He was born in 1862, and was the son of a singing-teacher at Marseilles. After serving his time in the

army, he began, at twenty-three years of age, to study singing under his father's instruction.

M. Albert Saleza was a new importation of the season of 1898-99. He lived in Bruges, in the lower Pyrenees, until he reached the age of twenty, and had never thought that an operatic career lay before him, or even that he had a voice good enough to make anything of the kind possible. A friend volunteered to pay for his musical education if he wanted to go to Paris to study. He accepted the offer, and when he went to Paris spoke the patois of his own land so persistently that he had to study the French of Paris.

Saleza made his chief success as Romeo. He has a pure, powerful, vibrant, tenor voice, and is a thorough artist of the French school. He phrases exquisitely, and has strong dramatic temperament.

The season of 1899–1900 brought Fraulein Milka Ternina, the only female singer who was new to America this season. Fraulein Ternina's reputation was great abroad, and she was warmly received here as Elizabeth in "Tannhäuser," though many critics declared that she could not compare with Lehmann, Sucher, or Klafsky. She also sang Isolde, Senta, and Leonora with success.

Madame Sembrich again appeared, and was the most brilliant singer of the season, investing each character with new charms and beauty. Madame Schumann-Heink strengthened the hold on public favour which she had earned in former appearances. Madame Eames received a warm welcome, and appeared for the first time as Aïda, in which part she greatly pleased her admirers. Madame Nordica renewed her former triumphs, giving a superb impersonation of Donna Anna, and appearing

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SIGNOR SCOTTI.

as Brünnhilde in the Wagnerian Cycle of the "Ring," also as Venus in "Tannhäuser," and her other, older rôles. Madame Clementine de Vere-Sapio also appeared several times, and did excellent work.

The other leading singers were Madame Gadski, Madame Mantelli, Mlle. Zelie de Lussan, Madame Suzanne Adams, Madame Olitzka, and Miss Susan Strong.

The new male singers of this season were Alvarez, Scotti, Cornubert, Bertram, Friedrichs, and Pini-Corsi.

Of these, Signor Scotti seemed to gain popularity most readily. Young and unheralded, his fresh, well-trained voice, intelligent acting, and conscientious work showed him to be a singer of much promise. And in the following season, when "La Tosca" was produced, Mr. Scotti was the embodiment of the malignant, treacherous Scarpia. As singer and actor he gave a performance of thrilling power.

Pini-Corsi excelled as Don Pasquale and similar buffo parts.

Herr Bertram, whose reputation was by no means small, made his first appearance before an American audience as Vanderdecken in "The Flying Dutchman," and played chiefly Wagnerian rôles.

Friedrichs made a moderate success as Beckmesser.

Edouard de Reszke, Plançon, Van Rooy, Campanari, Dippel, Saleza, and Salignac all sang during the season, but appeared in no new parts.

Emil Paur, who conducted German opera during this season, is best known in America as conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which post he held for five years. He is a native of Czernovitz, and played the violin and piano in public at the age of eight. Graduating from the Vienna Conservatoire in 1870, he joined the Court Opera Orchestra as first violin and assistant

soloist, became capellmeister at Kassel in 1876, served in a similar capacity at Königsberg and Mannheim, where he also conducted a series of subscription concerts, and was capellmeister of the Leipzig City Theatre in 1891. In 1893 he was engaged as conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and in 1898 went to New York, where he became conductor of the Philharmonic Orchestra, succeeding Anton Seidl.

Monsieur Alvarez was imported in 1899, and great things were expected of him, as he was to fill the vacancy caused by the absence of Jean de Reszke. But it is no easy matter to fill the place of Jean de Reszke, and while Monsieur Alvarez was conceded to be an artist of admirable parts, yet the public was not satisfied. He is a robust tenor, a man of splendid presence, an actor of much grace, but his vocal method left much to be desired, and he frequently wanders from the pitch.

Albert Alvarez is a tall, broad-chested, black-haired Frenchman. He obtained a six weeks' leave of absence from the Paris Grand Opéra to sing in America. He is a native of Bordeaux, whose musical talent was well developed by the time he was eighteen years of age, when he was obliged to serve his time in the army. On his return from service he resumed his musical career, making his début as a singer at Ghent, and then singing at Lyons and Marseilles. He was next called to the Grand Opéra at Paris, where he appeared as Romeo, with Melba as Juliet.

Alvarez is a consummate actor, who shows dramatic instinct in all that he does. His voice is a union of lyric and robusto qualities, and his intensity sweeps everything before it. He excelled in the part of Romeo.

Madame Eugenia Mantelli is an artist of fine dramatic strength and authority, with a

full, resonant, and pure contralto voice. She is tall, slight, and handsome, with refined and charming expression. She went on the stage at the age of eighteen, and sang in many countries. In South America she met and married Signor di Mantovanni, whose wealth enabled her to retire from the stage. Two years later Signor Mantovanni lost his fortune, and his wife returned to her operatic career. She made her New York début in "Aïda" with Tamagno.

Miss Susan Strong is a typical American girl in appearance and manners — tall, broad-shouldered, and of commanding carriage, bright and wide awake. She is a dramatic soprano with a fresh, clear voice, and possesses stage presence of notable dignity. She made her début at Covent Garden in 1895, and two years later appeared in America.

Mlle. Rosa Olitzka was born in 1872 at Warsaw. Her father became cantor of a

Jewish synagogue at Berlin, in which city she first sang in concert in 1891. Her operatic début was made at Brünn in the following year, and she appeared as Azucana. After Brünn she sang at Berlin, Hamburg, and London. Her voice has a very extensive range, and has been called both a contralto and a mezzo-soprano.

Milka Ternina was spoken of as the dominating personality of the opera season of 1900–01. She is a native of a small village near Agram, and the daughter of poor parents. Her voice was first discovered by an obscure music-teacher in her native village. She became ambitious, and went to Vienna, where she entered the Conservatoire and studied for three years. She made her first appearance at Leipzig, in 1883, as Elizabeth, and her second as Elsa. After this she was at Graz for two years, and on the removal of Klafsky to Hamburg she was called to Bremen, where Seidl was con-

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MILKA TERNINA.

ductor. Here she added Brünnhilde and Isolde to her repertoire.

Her voice is a firmly controlled organ of liberal compass, and, for the most part, of agreeable quality, not powerful in the German sense, but one which makes its way irresistibly through the orchestral storm. Ternina is one of the few German singers who do not rely upon untuneful declamation; but while she is a mistress of the "bel canto" she understands how to use declamation when occasion demands. She is a human singer, with real and even remarkable brain power, who is supreme in Wagner's music dramas.

She came first to New York in one of Mr. Damrosch's companies in 1895, and was comparatively little heeded. When Miss Ternina joined the company at the Metropolitan, with the new prestige of her rising reputation in Munich and in London, sickness pursued her. Not until 1900 did her real

opportunity come and was she able to improve it. Even then the public of the opera was slow to appreciate her peculiar worth. Even now it is still puzzled. It is unused, for example, to the feminine quality of her Isolde; for example, to the endless feminine subtleties with which she fills a character that it has known only in large heroics. The atmosphere of buoyant, virginal youth that enwraps her Brünnhilde in "Die Walküre" eludes it. The maidenly introspection of her Elisabeth is in like case. But it has come to appreciate the beauty and the power of her singing, the deep yet delicate musical understanding that informs it, the dramatic perception that colours it. It is beginning to recognise the luminous intelligence that analyses each measure of the music and each phrase of the text; that weighs their musical beauty and their dramatic import, and then in actual performance fuses both into one moving whole. The season of 1900

–01 revealed the range of Miss Ternina's power. A great gulf separates the maidenly introspective grief of Elisabeth from the hot, vengeful despair of Santuzza. Yet each lies within Miss Ternina's grasp. The gap is yet wider between the passion of Isolde and the melodramatic raging of Floria Tosca. Yet she spans it. And about all that she does there is the same wealth of musical and dramatic understanding, the same feeling for musical beauty, the same ability to convey it. Physical power beyond a certain point she has not. Every other gift of the singing actress seems hers.

Mlle. Bauermeister, who has made many voyages to America, is one of the most versatile artists upon the operatic stage. She is a native of Hamburg, and a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music in London, where she gained the King's Scholarship. Her operatic career began at Her Majesty's

She can sing at short notice almost any part within the range of her voice, and has many times saved important performances by her readiness in emergencies. It is said that she has been called upon to sing three rôles in one night, and it is also related that once upon a time, when an emergency arose, Mlle. Bauermeister was ill, and the theatre had to close because there was no one else in the company who could sing her part. While she has not the dominating personality or the remarkable voice of a star, she is a thorough musician, has no trace of selfishness or jealousy, is always ready to help others, and is thoroughly popular amongst her fellow artists.

Mlle. Lucienne Bréval, who made her American début in 1900, is one of the stars of the Grand Opéra at Paris, and was more thoroughly discussed than any singer in the company. While opinion was very much divided concerning her, all were obliged to

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LUCIENNE BRÉVAL.

admit that she is a remarkable woman. She is very tall, carries herself admirably, and has a splendid figure. Her voice is large, rich, and expressive, a dramatic soprano, admirably adapted for the display of intense emotion. Her singing has many faults, but her phrasing and her acting, her gestures and expression, are such as to hypnotise her audience. Perhaps the best and most complete description of her, in a few words, is that which was written by Philip Hale on her performance of Valentine in "Les Huguenots:"

"Nature has been more than kind to Miss Bréval, for her face, which is sombre and almost sinister in repose, and lightens gloriously in the expression of her love, her sculptured figure, her subtle physical magnetism, that without effort on her part crosses the footlights and enwraps the hearer, all work synchronously and sympathetically with that strange voice which suggests the tropics

and exotic odours and sultry nights of darkness."

Mlle. Bréval was born about 1870. Her family have been known in musical affairs for generations. Her great-grandfather was a violoncellist before the same stage on which she reigns. She entered the Conservatoire when she was seventeen years old. After winning the first prize for opera she made her début in 1892 at the Paris Opéra House as Selika in "L'Africaine."

When "Die Meistersinger" was first given in Paris, Mlle. Bréval was selected to create the rôle of Eva.

Manuzio Bensaude is a baritone with a fine, clear, vibrant voice. He appeared in America in 1895, when he was twenty-six years of age. He was a native of the Azores, and began his career as an actor in Spain when eighteen years old. He made his operatic début some years later as Amonasro in "Aïda," and immediately won recognition.

Bensaude married Giuletta de Fano, a singer. His best part is that of the Toreador in "Carmen."

M. Claude Bonnard was one of the tenors of 1899, a year of discontent. He is a Frenchman, studied at Lyons conservatoire, and in 1889 made his début there in "William Tell." In 1891 he sang at Algiers, and in 1892 at Antwerp, and then in London.

Signor Giuseppe Campanari is a native of Venice. He became a cello player, and was a member of the orchestra at La Scala, Milan. While there he began to study voice and made some appearances in various opera-houses in Italy. In 1884 he came to America at the request of his brother Leandro, the violinist, and became a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. While in Boston he appeared as a singer with the Händel and Haydn Society, and in opera, and in 1893 he joined the Hinrich's Opera Company, travel-

ling with it for two years, when he became a member of the Abbey and Grau company, appearing in "Il Trovatore."

When Damrosch's opera, "The Scarlet Letter," was given for the first time, Campanari was chosen to create the part of Chillingworth.

He has a pure, virile, superb voice, a free delivery, broad and intelligent phrasing, and intense dramatic feeling. Moreover he is a good musician and has the grand opera manner.

Miss Suzanne Adams is a native of Cambridge, Mass., who, being gifted by nature with an unusually good voice and attractive personality, went to Paris with a view to an operatic career. After four years of hard study, and her full share of the disappointments which seem to be the inheritance of operatic aspirants, she succeeded in securing a hearing as Marguerite in "Faust," at very short notice and without rehearsal. She

made a success, and afterward secured an engagement at Covent Garden, in London. Following this she came to America in 1897 as a member of the Metropolitan Opera Company.

Miss Adams possesses a voice not extraordinary in volume or extent, but beautifully trained and of sweet quality. Her impersonation of Marguerite is graceful and artistic, but without great depth of feeling. It has been described as "a vivid illustration of the blessings of discretion."

Madame Louise Homer, who was also a newcomer in the season of 1900–01, is a native of Pittsburg, Pa., where her father was a Presbyterian minister. After some years of study in Philadelphia and in Boston, she went, in 1896, to Paris. Two years of hard work led to her début at Vichy in "La Favorita," and from that time she has been continually busy. Her English début took place at Covent Garden in May, '99, and in

the following September she came out at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels, where she was engaged for eight months. Returning in '99 to Covent Garden, she also sang at the first state concert at Buckingham Palace, before Queen Victoria.

Madame Homer has a contralto voice of brilliant quality and large volume, artistic temperament and considerable dramatic power. Her maiden name was Louise Beatty and she married Sydney Homer, a prominent music teacher, in 1896.

Miss MacIntyre is pleasing to see, with a clean, Scotch comeliness. In all that she does she is intelligent and highly trained; but her voice lacks sonority, warmth, sensuous beauty, and emotional colour.

Miss Fritz Scheff, a young singer of pleasing personality and with a light high soprano voice, made a favourable impression in 1900.

During the season of 1899–1900 Jean de Reszke remained abroad, and no tenor seemed

able to satisfy the public and reconcile them to his absence. The following season, however, found him again in America, and on his first appearance in New York he received an overwhelming welcome.

The following opinion may be regarded as indicating the estimation in which he is held:

"If the singers are the strength of the company, the strength of the singers is Jean de Reszke. Whatever may have been the condition of his voice in London last spring, he has returned to New York in the full possession of his powers, nay, in fuller possession of them than he was two years ago. One may quarrel as one likes with his notion of his parts. One may approve or disapprove the emotional colour that he chooses to impart to this or that passage. But all that he elects to do he can do. His voice has more power than it had two years ago. Neither its range nor its quality is one whit impaired. It's

gradations of tone are as adroit and as delightful as they have always been. His phrasing keeps its old perfection, his method its old flawlessness. He can still charge his singing with its old emotional warmth, with its old dramatic significance. He spares himself less, in the minor scenes of an opera, like that in Faust's study, than he has in many a winter in New York. His tones are less likely to be clouded at the outset of his work. He has gained in vitality and he has gained in subtle artistry. These are not matters of opinion. They are matters of fact, easy to verify, if the doubter cares to verify them and to turn his thoughts from voiceless rumours and envious jealousy. Of course, the first bloom has long since gone from Mr. de Reszke's voice. It was gone in a year after he appeared first in America. Finer and rarer qualities have more than compensated for it. For a night or two when he reappeared this winter, he seemed to

be singing with unusual caution. Long since it yielded to his wonted surety."

In the old days of Italian opera at the Academy of Music in New York (in 1856) the monthly expense for singers and orchestra amounted to about $13,000. A prima donna received $1,000 per month, and a first tenor $1,200. At the present day the weekly expenses of the Grau company amount to between $40,000 and $45,000.

At the end of the season of 1900–01 a table of operatic performances was published by one of the New York papers, which will serve to indicate the relative popularity of Italian, French, and German operas, and may be regarded as indicating the feeling throughout the country. Notwithstanding the chronic pessimism regarding the progress of opera, this list shows a great advance in the past few years, and as managers are able to gauge the taste of the public, and cater to it with a reasonable prospect of financial success, there

will doubtless be still greater opportunity to hear the newer works.

First Time.	Name of Opera.	Performances.
December 18	"Romeo et Juliette"	5
December 19	"Tannhäuser"	5
December 21	"Lohengrin"	8
December 22	"Aïda"	4
December 26	"La Bohême"	5
December 28	"Fidelio"	1
January 2	"Flying Dutchman"	2
January 4	"Faust"	7
January 5	"Die Walküre"	5
January 5	"Il Trovatore"	1
January 14	"Mefistofele"	2
January 16	"Le Cid"	3
January 23	"Don Giovanni"	2
January 25	"Tristan and Isolde"	4
January 28	"Les Huguenots"	4
February 4	"Tosca"	3
February 9	"Rigoletto"	2
February 18	"Lucia di Lammermoor"	2
February 18	"Cavalleria Rusticana"	4
February 20	"Die Meistersinger"	3
February 25	"Das Rheingold"	2
March 1	"Siegfried"	2
March 6	"Götterdämmerung"	3

First Time.	Name of Opera.	Performances.
March 9	"Pagliacci"	1
March 15	"L'Africaine"	1
March 17	"Traviata"	1
March 20	"Salammbô"	3
March 30	"Carmen"	1
	Total	86
	Minus four "Cavalleria Rusticana"	4
	Total performances	82

Composers.	Times Represented.
Wagner	34
Gounod	12
Verdi	8
Puccini	8
Meyerbeer	5
Reyer	3
Massenet	3
Mascagni	4
Boïto	2
Mozart	2
Donizetti	2
Beethoven	1
Leoncavallo	1
Bizet	1
Total	86
Total number of operas given	28

Language and number of times rendered:

German	37
French	25
Italian	24

The following summary of the season of 1900 in Paris will show how far in point of performances, variety of works, etc., the New York season (which is the longest in America) falls short of the Paris season.

The performances at the Grand Opera last year reached the figures of 228. There were as follows:

	Number of Performances.
Faust (Gounod)	40
Romeo et Juliette (Gounod)	19
Salammbô (Reyer)	12
Sigurd (Reyer)	2
Samson et Dalila (Saint-Saëns)	19
Le Cid (Massenet)	16
La Prise de Troie (Berlioz)	7
Joseph (Mehul)	5
Hellé (Duvernoy)	2
Hamlet (A. Thomas)	4
Lancelot du Lac (Joncières)	6
Patrie (Paladilhe)	11

	Number of Performances.
Lohengrin (Wagner)	6
Les Maitres Chanteurs (Wagner)	7
Tannhäuser (Wagner)	12
La Valkyrie (Wagner)	15
Aïda (Verdi)	3
Rigoletto (Verdi)	3
Guillaume Tell (Rossini)	9
Les Huguenots (Meyerbeer)	20
Le Prophète (Meyerbeer)	10

Of these performances :

Gounod had fifty-nine representations with two works
Wagner, forty representations with four works.
Meyerbeer, thirty representations with two works.
Saint-Saëns, nineteen representations with one work

CHAPTER IX.

OPERA IN ENGLISH.

In the early days of opera in America, English was the language chosen and the ballad opera was that which pleased the people. It was not considered necessary to sing in a language which few of the audience could understand. When Garcia came and electrified Americans with Italian opera (in Italian) his art appealed to his audiences and they cared little or nothing about the language, — in fact, if Garcia and his company sang as many Italian singers of later days have sung, the language was almost entirely omitted, a few innocuous vowels doing duty for whole pages of libretto.

Garcia, however, did not cause the abolition of English opera. His daughter, Madame Malibran, finding that English was the customary language for opera in America, learned the English language in order to qualify herself for such operatic work as she could find in New York. It was not until the advent of the Havana company, near the middle of the nineteenth century, that Italian was found to be essential.

At the same time French opera was being constantly sung in New Orleans, and as travelling became more feasible French singers found places in the Italian opera companies which travelled in the northern States, and gradually French opera became popular. But French opera became synonymous with opera bouffe, — Offenbach, Auber, etc., and in the same way English opera gradually became identified with comic opera, or works of a light class quite distinct from grand opera, while a great deal of that which has gone by

the name of English opera, but which is sometimes American, can be classed as neither grand nor comic, but ludicrous.

The establishment of Italian opera, however much it may be or may have been criticised, was a distinct gain to musical art in America, and in a much greater degree has the struggle for recognition of German and French opera benefited the cause of art.

French opera demonstrated the advantages, if not the necessity, of diction, and proved that language was as much a part of the opera as music. German opera demonstrated that declamation was not entirely satisfactory without tone. In the old days of German opera, the singers declaimed in harsh, guttural tones, and their art was satisfactory only to those who could enjoy no other. To-day the most successful German singers produce their tones in the more pleasing manner of the Italian school.

If grand opera can be sung and enjoyed

in Italian, French, and German, there seems to be no valid reason why it cannot be sung in English. But there are many reasons which have operated and do operate against grand opera in English; some of them are good, and others are weak, but none the less effective.

In the first place, the English-speaking nations have not supported opera as the French, Germans, and Italians have done. Although they have been willing to pay great prices to hear successful operas sung by successful singers, they have not subsidised opera in such a manner that new works can be brought out for trial without the risk of financial loss to individuals. Hence, no individuals financially responsible will take the risk, and we are obliged to look to Europe for all new productions in the line of grand opera. The production of a new grand opera in English at Milan, Paris, or any European operatic centre (Bayreuth for

instance) is in the existing musical traditions an extremely improbable event.

There seems to be very little encouragement for the American composer to put forth his efforts upon grand opera, for there is practically no hope of his work ever being heard. There are exceptions, of course, to every rule, but the exceptions in this matter are such as to confirm the rule in a most decided manner.

Another reason why grand opera in English is unsuccessful is that the great singers, as a rule, decline to sing in English, not because there is any objection to the language, but because they fear they will lose their prestige. It is therefore understood that opera in English is sung by artists not of the first rank, and that is sufficient, without regard to financial considerations, to injure it in the eyes of a public pampered for fifty years or more with the "star" system. This reason should not exist, but

as it does exist it must be recognised and deplored.

Another reason is that the libretto of an Italian opera (or French or German) translated into English is generally the most unmitigated rubbish, — not that it is rubbish in its own language, but because translations frequently have that peculiarity.

An illustration of this may be found in the following translation of the sextette from "Lucia di Lammermoor," in which the interweaving of the six principal singers and the chorus gives a very peculiar effect, and leads one at once to the conclusion that Italian opera is best in Italian.

"Go! or thy blood shall quickly flow
Go — yes — flow — Yes — yes — shall flow.
Thy blood — Go — go — go — hence — yes
On thy head. Go — go — Yes — yes — fall,
Shall fall! Vanish! Yes, shall fall.
Go! Ah yes! Ah yes! Cease, oh cease!
Madman! Our rage exciting on thy head
Shall fall — shall fall — Thy blood.

Yes on thy head shall fall. It shall
Fall! Thy blood it shall fall.
It shall fall. Hence, then hence!
Then thy blood shall fall. Yes
Thy blood shall fall!"

In 1886 the time seemed ripe for the establishment of a national opera, and the question was agitated by a number of prominent people. The educational idea was made a leading feature of the enterprise in a somewhat similar manner to that which had been adopted by Ole Bull in 1855, and the foundation of the National Conservatory of Music appeared as one of the prime motives.

Madame Emy Fursch-Madi, who was placed in charge of the vocal department of the National Conservatory, was a dramatic soprano with a creditable operatic record. Born in Bayonne, France, in 1847, she was educated at the Paris Conservatoire, and on commencing her operatic career made a hit as Marguerite in Gounod's "Faust." She

was so successful that at the request of Verdi she created the part of Aïda when that opera was produced at Brussels. Madame Fursch-Madi's first visit to America was made in 1874, when she was a member of the New Orleans French opera company. She was engaged in London in 1879 to 1881, and afterward sang in New York, both at the Academy of Music and the Metropolitan Opera House. She became a decided favourite in this country, and her chief rôles were Lucrezia Borgia, Donna Anna, Aïda, Leonora, and Valentine. Her last appearance was made at the Metropolitan Opera House as Ortrud, in "Lohengrin," and she died at Warrenville, N. J., in 1894.

"The new American opera scheme," wrote one of the papers, "will tend to assure not only ourselves, but all the rest of the world, that Americans can do something on their own account, and that the English language is worthy to be wedded to music, and that it

can be used in opera without at all lowering the standard of excellence of a performance."

All this had been admirably proved before. That which the new enterprise did prove was that over-advertising is apt to bring discredit upon the enterprise, and that the capital with which a large organisation is to be exploited must be something more substantial than newspaper talk.

The opera started with great enthusiasm, and expectation was wrought to a high pitch. Mrs. Jeannette M. Thurber, the chief promoter of the scheme, advanced $100,000 to give the company a start, and incidentally she founded the National Conservatory of New York, which has been a good school of music ever since.

Mr. Theodore Thomas was the conductor of the opera, and the singers were thoroughly capable artists, though few were what could be called singers of international reputation.

Emma Antonia Justine Juch was one of the

leading sopranos of the National Opera Company, and was a native of Vienna, born of naturalised American parents during a temporary sojourn abroad. To vindicate her adopted country, or rather the adopted country of her parents, she was born on July 4th (1861). Her father was a musician of Detroit, but moved to New York in 1864, and in that city Miss Juch obtained her musical education. She was one of the young and promising American singers discovered by Colonel Mapleson during his American tours, and he engaged her to join his company.

Miss Juch went to London, and made her début there as Filina in "Mignon." She was with Mapleson three seasons, and sang under Theodore Thomas in 1884, when he brought out Madame Materna. Miss Juch sang on alternate nights with Christine Nilsson.

In 1886 she joined the National Company, in which she became deservedly popular

On the collapse of the enterprise she organised an opera company of her own, and travelled extensively. A few years ago Miss Juch married Mr. Francis L. Wellman, a lawyer.

One of the chief singers of the company in 1886 was Madame Helen Hastreiter, a native of Louisville, Ky., whose parents had moved to Madison, Wis., when she was a very small child. She was remarkable for her singing even as a child, and at the age of twelve held the position of soloist in a church in Chicago, to secure which somewhat important engagement she encouraged the idea that she was sixteen years old. After making some public appearances in Chicago, she went to Italy about 1883 and studied under the Lampertis, father and son. In due time she secured an appearance in opera, and was engaged by Ricordi for a tour, during which she was to sing certain leading rôles of Verdi.

In 1884, while in Chicago, Colonel Mapleson heard Miss Hastreiter sing, and promised her an engagement if she would go to London. This she did, and was a member of his company in 1885. Returning to America, she was engaged for the American Opera Company, to sing contralto rôles, although she had previously always sung soprano. She made a great success in "Orpheus," a rôle which she repeated in Italy some time afterward, for on completing her engagement in America she again went abroad, and enjoyed a prosperous career in Europe.

Miss Hastreiter married Dr. L. C. Bourgonzi, a distinguished nerve specialist, and lives at Genoa. Her voice had the remarkable compass of three octaves, from D on the third line of the bass staff. The upper chest notes and medium registers were very full, rich, and vibrant, and her high notes were pure and ringing while she was young, but as time went on she sang only contralto

or mezzo-contralto rôles. Her enunciation was excellent, and she was perfectly familiar with four languages.

Pauline L'Allemand, another prima donna of this company, was a native of Syracuse, N. Y., her maiden name being Pauline Ellhasser. She went to Germany at the age of fourteen, and received her musical education at Dresden, where she attracted the notice of the impresario of one of the royal theatres, and made her début at Königsberg. She fell in love with a young actor named L'Allemand, and they were married in London. After the collapse of the American Opera Company, Madame L'Allemand joined the Boston Ideal Opera Company, as did several other singers of that unfortunate enterprise.

Jessie Bartlett Davis, who has since become well known and popular throughout America, was a leading contralto of the American Opera Company, and afterward

joined the "Bostonians." She is a native of Morris, Ill., and her musical education was entirely American. Part of her studies were pursued in Chicago and part in New York. She made her début in 1882 at the Academy of Music, when she sang Siebel to Patti's Marguerite. Her career has been devoted almost entirely to light opera.

Tom Karl was one of the most popular lyric tenors at the time of the American Opera Company, of which he was a member. He was a native of Ireland, and after studying in Italy and Paris, and making some reputation in opera abroad, he was engaged by Madame Parepa-Rosa for her English Opera Company singing in this country. In 1879 he was one of the original members of the Boston Ideal Opera Company. His fine stage presence and silvery voice, with his easy method of producing it, made him a great favourite.

Miss Kate Bensberg was a soprano, a

native of St. Louis, who joined the company after five years' study in Germany. Miss Annie Montague, a native of Baltimore, who had been a member of the Kellogg Company and the Strakosch Company, was also a member of the National Company, and a leading contralto. Miss Mathilde Phillips, sister of the renowned Adelaide Phillips, was also one of the leading contraltos.

William Fessenden, tenor, was a native of Buffalo, and had been a member of the Kellogg Company. William H. Lee, a high baritone, was a New Yorker by birth, and had been trained in church choirs. Myron Whitney, the basso, is known throughout the United States as one of the finest bassos of native production. John Gilbert, a pupil of Ettore Barili, and G. Fox, a native of London, and a pupil of Sims Reeves, with a good voice and dramatic talent, were all prominent, but the most important tenor was William Candidus, Jr.,

who was born of German parents in Philadelphia in 1843, his father at that time being employed as a letter-carrier. He was always fond of music, and when a mere boy joined a military band as cornet. His first appearance on the lyric stage was made in a German operetta at the Concordia Theatre. When the war broke out he enlisted as a private in the 17th Pennsylvania Militia, and in three months he became lieutenant of the 112th regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers. Leaving the army in 1864 he went to New York, and found employment in the house of Steinway's, where he met many musicians and operatic artists. He determined to study for the stage, and in 1872 went to Berlin, having married the daughter of Mr. Henry Steinway.

In two years Candidus made his début at Weimar, with much success, but in 1875, having lost his wife, he returned to Philadelphia, where, shortly after his arrival, his

father also died. The following year he returned to Europe for further study, going now to Milan. In 1878 he was engaged by Mapleson for London, and sang there during three seasons, after which Mapleson offered him an engagement for his American season, which Mr. Candidus declined for financial reasons. On returning to America for a vacation he was engaged by the American Opera Company, and sang with his usual success.

Mr. Candidus was a man of imposing stature, standing about six feet, and weighing over two hundred pounds. His voice was a *tenore di forza* of phenomenal power and compass, and of sweet sympathetic quality.

The American Opera Company was unable to sustain the enthusiasm with which it had started off, and when efforts were made to capitalise it, the response was far from being equal to the hopes of the promoters. After various efforts had failed, the name of the

company was changed from the American Opera Company, Limited, to the National Opera Company, organised under the laws of New Jersey, with a capital of $500,000, of which $1,000 was paid up. Under this organisation it did not take long to bring the enterprise to a conclusion.

From the first it had been criticised as being unable to sustain the promises made. It was stated that, while the orchestra, singers, and management were all good, their capabilities had been vastly over-estimated, and the best part of the whole organisation was the ballet, which was imported.

In June, 1887, Theodore Thomas resigned, giving as the reason that the company owed him six months' salary. Various rumours discrediting the organisation were circulated, and the public in the large cities showed no disposition to support the National Opera Company. Repeated financial scandals and vigorous opposition by a portion of the press

did much to reduce the chances of success, and the losses in six weeks amounted to nearly $100,000. It is curious to note in this connection that Boston and Cincinnati, two of the most musical cities in the United States, gave the least support.

In 1888 the manager of the company was arrested in Washington at the instance of Eloi Sylva, an imported tenor (the company had begun to part with its traditions), and the orchestra refused to play. The company therefore disbanded, and the members sought employment elsewhere, leaving to future promoters of American opera a very fine object-lesson.

A few years later an effort was made in Boston to establish a permanent opera company somewhat on the European plan; that is, to have a stock company of competent singers, and to give good (not great) performances of standard works at moderate prices. The enterprise worked very well so far as was

discernible to the public eye, and though the representations included many operas which are light and frivolous and should hardly be included in a scheme for grand opera, yet the enterprise was appreciated. About the time when the public had accustomed itself to the idea of opera at the Castle Square Theatre, an end was put to the enterprise, but the Castle Square Company appeared in New York, Chicago, and elsewhere with considerable success. It existed for five years.

While not in every particular satisfactory to its promoters, this enterprise developed into the Metropolitan Grand English Opera Company, under the management of Mr. Henry M. Savage, in the fall of 1900, and the season was opened at the Metropolitan Opera House with a performance of Gounod's "Faust," in which the part of Marguerite was taken by Miss Phœbe Strakosch, a niece of the impresario of former days.

As in the case of the American Opera

Company, the singers were of good ability, though there were few great stars amongst them. The chorus was excellent, and the orchestra equally so, while the operas were mounted with care, and the enterprise deserved success.

About thirty principal singers were engaged, the majority of whom had made some reputation abroad. The chorus was selected from local talent, and the orchestra numbered about fifty.

Of the sopranos the best known was Zelie de Lussan, who made a reputation in this country as prima donna of the Bostonians, after which she went abroad and delighted audiences in London and Paris, her best rôles being those of Carmen and Mignon. Since then she has several times appeared as prima donna of grand opera companies, in this country, and has acquired an enviable position in her profession.

Miss Minnie Tracey is a native of New

York, and has sung in opera in Geneva, Nice, Marseilles, and other cities of France and in Milan and Genoa, also Cairo. She made her American début in Philadelphia as Brünnhilde in Reyer's "Sigurd," in 1895, and was leading soprano of the Hinrich's company during that season. Miss Tracey's connection with the Metropolitan English Grand Opera Company was not long, and she returned to Europe.

Miss Elandi, whose name is taken from Cleveland, the city of her birth, studied in Paris with Madame Marchesi. Her operatic début was made in Rome, in Bizet's "Pearl Fishers." After a tour through Italy, Spain, and Germany, she gave the first English presentation of the rôle of Santuzza in Paris. She has played many rôles under the bâtons of the different composers.

Miss Fanchon Thompson, mezzo-soprano, is a Chicago girl who has had the training of two years at the Paris Opéra Comique. Miss

Thompson made her début there in December, 1898, as Carmen. Last June she sang Siebel, in "Faust," at the Covent Garden, London. She then returned to the Opéra Comique, where she has been singing the rôle of the Prince, in Massenet's "Cendrillon," with considerable success.

Miss Phœbe Strakosch, soprano, who made her American début on the opening night of the season, is a member of the celebrated Strakosch family. She was born in Stockholm, a niece of Maurice and Max, famous in the history of opera in America. In 1895 she made her début at Trieste as Marguerite in Gounod's "Faust."

Miss Strakosch sang Marguerite, Elsa, and Hero at Covent Garden in 1899. She also created the leading roles in "Sapho," "Andrea Chenier," and "Fedora," when those works were produced in Milan. She has in 1901 again appeared with success at Covent Garden, London.

Miss Elsa Marney, contralto, is of German parentage, and first appeared in public when eight years old. At sixteen she toured Germany, Russia, and Finland in concert. Among her best rôles are said to be those of Amneris and Ortrud.

Miss Ingeborg Ballstrom, coloratura soprano, was born in Stockholm. She made her first professional appearance there at the Royal Opera, singing Filina in "Mignon," and remaining there for three seasons. She then went to Berlin.

Mr. Philip Brozel, tenor, was born in St. Petersburg, but was educated in England. He is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, and made his début in 1896 at Covent Garden as Canio in "Pagliacci."

Mr. William Paull, baritone, is a Cornishman. At seven years of age he was a London chorister. His professional début was made at Albert Hall, London, in a performance of Sullivan's "Golden Legend," under

the leadership of the late Sir Joseph Barnby. He was engaged for the Carl Rosa Opera Company and made his operatic début as Capulet in "Romeo and Juliet." He created Marcel in the first English production of "La Boheme."

Mr. Clarence Whitehill, basso, made his début at Brussels in 1898 as Friar Lawrence in "Romeo and Juliet," and then went to the Opéra Comique. His first appearance there was as Nilakantha in "Lakme," and since that time he has sung many of the leading rôles in the repertory. Marengo, Iowa, was the birthplace of Mr. Whitehill.

Mr. Leslie Walker, an English basso, is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, London. His first professional experience was gained in the company directed by Mr. D'Oyly Carte, where he sang in comic opera and musical comedy. His début in grand opera was made at the Drury Lane Theatre, then under management of Sir Augustus

Harris. Then he joined the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company.

Madame Louise Meisslinger was born and educated in Vienna. Her parents were highly cultivated and of good position. Her career was commenced at an absurdly early age, so that now, while a very young woman, she has a wealth of tradition and experience behind her.

Madame Meisslinger's début was made in "The Prophet" in Vienna, after which she came to America under Edward Stanton's management, appearing here as Brangäne to Lehmann's Isolde, Niemann's Tristan, and Seidl's conducting. An English season at Covent Garden followed, and several seasons with the Carl Rosa Company. Sir Augustus Harris next persuaded her to create the part of the witch in "Hänsel and Gretel" in America, which she did with enormous success. In fact, Madame Meisslinger's work, all in all, has had potent bearing upon

the latter-day traditions of certain parts in America.

This enterprise ended prematurely, and the company disbanded at Washington at the end of January, 1901. Like all other companies, it presented many vulnerable points to the critics. These points will always appear in some form or other when the organisation has to depend upon its earnings, for it is a well-known fact that the education of the popular mind is an expensive process, and managers therefore sandwich into their repertory works which are sure to draw, just as Maretzek urged Adams to give Italian opera once a week in order to pay salaries, when he established his German Opera company.

In the case of the Metropolitan English Grand Opera Company, we may pass over the complaint that the singers were not the half-dozen great stars whose names draw big audiences in the Grau company, and merely express the opinion that they were of ability

sufficient to ensure success in any country except the United States. The following excerpt from a published interview with Mr. Savage will show how his enterprise was received.

"Mr. Savage declared that the advance sale of seats in Pittsburg was $7,500, which figure he considered decidedly auspicious and satisfactory. In Chicago the patronage was liberal and gratifying, and in fact the Western tour, so far as accomplished, has been most pleasing. It was in New York that Mr. Savage learned a few things which forced upon him the conviction that English grand opera has yet to meet with popular and permanent support. He discovered that the opera-going class there does not pay much attention to the critics, and that it waits until Wednesday at least before venturing out. The result was empty benches on Monday and Tuesday, when there should have been big houses. There was no profit

in that sort of thing. Again, the heavy operas like 'Tannhäuser,' and 'Les Huguenots' fell flat, while those of lighter calibre, like 'Carmen,' 'Faust,' or 'Aïda,' and the double bills, like 'I Pagliacci' and 'Cavalleria Rusticana,' caught the public fancy. When it came to the 'Mikado' and 'Pinafore,' the Metropolitan Opera House was crowded."

The two latter operas should not be included in grand opera, although one may well ask why they have not as much right there as "Don Pasquale" or "Il Barbiere," but they are successful largely because they are sung in the language for which they are intended. Artistic unity is as necessary for the success of opera in English as in any other language, but at the present day the question of operatic success appears to be more one of fashion than of artistic unity.

This experiment, which, beginning with the Castle Square Company, extended over

a period of about five years, was sufficiently extended to show to the managers some of the peculiarities of the American public. The public, notwithstanding the fact that, when Mapleson was in a Western city a few years ago, a deputation came and requested him to put on "Pinafore" instead of "Lucia," as the people were tired of hearing what they could not understand, — notwithstanding such incidents, it seems to matter but little to the public in what language an opera is given. But the first thought is the "cast." There is much outcry against the star system, but Mr. Grau once stated that, when "Les Huguenots" was given with the "gigantic" cast which included Melba, Nordica, Jean and Edouard de Reszke, Lasalle, and Maurel, notwithstanding the fact that the performance cost ten thousand dollars, the public paid a profit of four thousand dollars to hear it. If there are outcries against the "star" system, there is much to justify

these outcries, but the star system seems to be the only practicable one in the conditions now prevalent in America. As long as Americans are obliged to look to Europe for that which is highest in the musical art, so long will the people neglect opera in English, operatic stock companies, and all those things which appeal to common sense and moderate means. Musical taste has developed wonderfully during the last half century, but, until America stands on an equal footing, artistically, with Europe, it is unlikely that the public will be contented with what they are educated to believe is not "the best." When American and English operas are produced in Paris, Italy, and the musical centres of Europe, the American public may be induced to believe that it is the correct thing to hear opera in English.

American singers, who have won recognition in the great art centres of Europe, are worth as much to American audiences as for-

eign singers, — the public will flock as eagerly to hear them. But American opera. We are going along very nicely, and American composers are doing better work every year, but a long way off — perhaps about the middle of this century — there may be a day when an American composer may produce a work which can be performed in English at Paris, or Berlin, or Milan. When that day arrives, American opera will probably be good enough for American audiences, and by that time the musical conditions will have changed to such an extent that stock companies will make a profit, and opera will be enjoyed for the music rather than for the excitement of hearing celebrities of world-wide reputation, or for the opportunity of exhibiting a wealth of jewelry.

THE END.

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